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UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 538th MEETING

Held at Swawek Hall, Windhoek, Namibia
on Monday, 9 April 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. ZUZE (Zambia)

Opening of the special plenary meetings in Namibia

Address by His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia

Statement by the President

Messages to the Council

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The meeting was called to order at 3.20 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SPECIAL PLENARY MEETINGS IN NAMIBIA

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the United Nations Council for Namibia, I have the honour and pleasure to welcome His Excellency Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, members of the Cabinet, Members of Parliament and other distinguished Namibian invitees to the opening meeting of the special plenary meetings of the Council. It is a very gratifying and moving experience for us finally to join together on Namibian soil with those whose long and arduous struggle finally made independence possible for this great country.

I also wish to welcome members of the diplomatic corps, representatives of Member States, the specialized agencies and other governmental and non-governmental organizations and members of the press. I extend to all of them a cordial invitation to attend the special plenary meetings of the Council over the next three days.

May we all stand and observe a minute of silence in honour of all Namibian patriots who gave their lives so that their brothers, sisters and children might enjoy the fruits of freedom and independence which so abound in Namibia today.

All those present observed a minute of silence.

ADDRESS BY HIS EXCELLENCY MR. SAM NUJOMA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

The PRESIDENT: I now have the great honour of inviting His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, to address the opening meeting of the special plenary meetings of the Council.

President NUJOMA: It is my distinct honour, on behalf of the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia, warmly to welcome all those present to the capital of a liberated Namibia. It is my fervent wish that all of you will feel comfortable during your stay here and that your deliberations will be successful.

The United Nations Council for Namibia has a long and special history, which is so closely identified with that of our people's struggle for freedom and independence. This dates back to 1966, when the United Nations General Assembly, by its historic resolution 2145 (XXI), terminated South Africa's Mandate over Namibia and placed our country under the direct responsibility of the United Nations. There is no need for a reminder that the Council was established by General Assembly resolution 2248 (S-V) of 1967 in order to carry out that sacred task until Namibia became independent. Since then the Council has been closely identified with the just struggle of the Namibian people for self-determination and national independence. By that close association, the Council became a true partner in the decolonization process of our country.

Through its programmes of work year after year, the Council assisted in speeding up Namibia's independence by representing the country in a number of important international institutions and at different conferences, with the aim of mobilizing international support for our cause. In this important task, it closely consulted with the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and the Namibian people. Reports by the Council and other materials concerning various aspects of the struggle of the Namibian people and the conditions prevailing in the country have been distributed world wide and will for ever remain an integral part of

(President Nujoma)

Namibia's history. Hopefully, the Council will, at the appropriate time, make such material available to the Government and people of Namibia as a constant reminder to future generations of its work.

The Council assisted the Namibian exile community in many crucial ways, including the issue of travel documents, emergency programmes, the Nationhood Programme and individual scholarships. The Council was instrumental in the creation of the United Nations Institute for Namibia in Lusaka, Zambia, and later the Vocational Training Centre at Cuacra, in the People's Republic of Angola.

All those programmes and institutions played a vital role in providing Namibians with the skills essential for the administration of an independent Namibia. The Council can therefore truly pride itself on having been part of our struggle against apartheid colonialism.

It is for those reasons that I take this opportunity to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the constituent members of the Council, both the pioneers and subsequent ones, as well as the observers, for their vital contributions and selfless dedication to our struggle, quite often at the expense of their own national interests.

The fact that the Council was refused entry into Namibia years ago and therefore was denied the opportunity to fulfil its mandate remains a sad reminder to the people of Namibia and the international community at large.

Naturally, in the execution of its tasks the Council has been under the dynamic stewardship of consecutive Presidents, whom I whole-heartedly thank through the incumbent, Ambassador Peter Dingi Zuze of the Republic of Zambia, a country with which Namibia has a socio-cultural affinity and with which it maintains excellent relations.

I should also like to pay a deserved tribute to the respective Commissioners who executed the Council's policies with dedication and zeal. Let me recall

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(President Nujoma)

with grief and sadness the extraordinary contributions made by that unique fighter, the late Sean McBride, first Commissioner for Namibia, whose pioneering work and far-sighted vision made a lasting impact on that office. I recall the tragic and untimely death of the late Commissioner for Namibia, Mr. Bernt Carlsson, which prevented him from witnessing the signing of the agreement to implement Security Council resolution 435 (1978) and robbed us of his presence on this historic occasion.

Let me likewise thank the Secretariat staff for their often forgotten but essential work, which more often than not makes all of us look good. I am happy to see many of them here today.

(President Nujoma)

The realization of the self-determination and national independence of the Namibian people was a direct result of the determination, courage and sacrifice of men and women who, against all odds, gave their lives to the cause of justice. It is a matter of historic record that many of our best sons and daughters paid with their precious lives for our freedom. Others were maimed. We shall never forget their outstanding and selfless contribution to our struggle for national liberation. We are convinced that the United Nations was able successfully to assist in the decolonization process of Namibia on the basis of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) because of our steadfastness and commitment to the struggle for our cherished goal of achieving national independence and sovereignty.

At this juncture, I should like once again to express our gratitude to the United Nations Secretary-General, his Special Representative, Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) as a whole for a job well done.

Now that we have achieved our independence and sovereignty, it is our intention immediately to attend to the teething problems which we have inherited from the colonial past. These include rampant unemployment, a war-ravaged economy, burning land issues, poor education, health care and acute housing shortages. We are committed to mending the ills of the past and ensuring social justice for all our people, particularly those who have been victims of an unequal social order.

It is for this reason that we have adopted a policy of national reconciliation aimed at achieving national unity and harmony among our people, who have for too long been divided on the basis of colour, race and ethnic and other origins. In accordance with our Constitution, apartheid and racial discrimination of any kind

> "shall be prohibited ... and may be rendered criminally punishable by the ordinary Courts".

(President Nujoma)

Every Namibian, regardless of creed or colour, will be able to make his or her vital contribution to the national reconstruction and development of our new nation. The natural and human resources of this country make us confident about the future.

It is our hope that the international community will come to our assistance in this regard. The Secretary-General has, in consultation with us, taken the initiative to host a Pledging Conference on Namibia in New York in the very near future, at which our Government will put forward priorities in vital areas for international consideration and assistance. We hope that the international community will respond favourably.

With the lifting of sanctions earlier imposed against Namibia as a result of its occupation by South Africa, we now look forward to both bilateral and multilateral co-operation and normal trade with and investment from the rest of the world.

Therefore, Namibia intends to become a full member of various international and regional organizations, where we will make our humble contribution towards the maintenance of world peace and security and the promotion of South-South and North-South co-operation. Recently our country joined the Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference (SADCC) and the Commonwealth. We shall soon join the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Front-Line States, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and the ranks of the African, Caribbean and Pacific nations. We shall rely on the traditional support of our friends constituting the Council today and many others in such endeavours.

In conclusion, let me once again thank all those Governments, United Nations specialized agencies, governmental, non-governmental and other organizations and individuals for their vital contribution to our struggle for national independence. It is the intention of the Government of Namibia to establish

(President Nujoma)

cordial and friendly relations with other nations for the creation and promotion of mutual interests at both bilateral and multilateral levels.

I wish everyone present a pleasant stay in Namibia and successful deliberations.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency President Sam Nujoma for his statement.

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT

The PRESIDENT: I should now like to take this opportunity to address the meeeting in my dying capacity as President of the United Nations Council for Namibia.

When 23 years ago the United Nations General Assembly established the United Nations Council for Namibia as the legal Administering Authority for Namibia until independence, South Africa, the then occupying Power, prevented the Council from entering the Territory of Namibia. Thus the Council was forced for 23 years to attempt to fulfil its mandate from the wilderness. When one year ago the process for the implementation of the plan for the independence of Namibia was finally triggered it was said that the Council for all those years had not been impartial in its work on behalf of the Namibian people and therefore could not come to Namibia during the process. One has to wonder at the ingenuity of the human being. A so-called impartiality clause was invoked to prevent the Council from coming to Namibia to observe and if possible to participate in the implementation of the independence plan.

After the elections the Council wished to come to Namibia to prepare its last report to the General Assembly before Independence Day so that it would not meet again after Namibia had become independent. It was, sadly, said that owing to logistic problems this could not happen.

(The President)

After independence, when finally the people of Namibia were firmly in control of their destiny the United Nations Council for Namibia has been able to come to this land where the sun seems always to shine. We are here to prepare our last report to the General Assembly, in consultation with the Government of Namibia.

(The President)

I was here for the independence celebration to represent the Council. We are now all of us here. We are all filled with emotions and happiness, and we thank you, Mr. President, for the welcome you have given us, for the facilities you have put at our disposal and for the efficient way in which your Government, though in its infancy, helped us to organize these special meetings only two weeks after independence - testimony that Namibia is in good hands and is on the move.

It is often said that to every beginning there is an end and that for every end there is a beginning. For us in the Council the end has come and the beginning has begun. Only philosophy and historical perspective can help to illuminate the sufferings of the people of Namibia and the work of the Council. As we are ending our mandate, allow me to begin at the beginning.

Several years ago, when this century was younger and many of us were still unborn, a foreign soldier stood upon Namibian shores. He spoke with the exuberant arrogance of a savage victor, and if arrogance had been all he possessed or if indeed his thoughts had been merely his own he would by now have been forgotten, if not forgiven. Referring to only one of the ethnic components that make up the brave Namibian nation, he proclaimed:

> "The Herero nation must leave the country ... If it will not do so, I shall compel it by force. Inside our territory every tribesman, armed or unarmed, with or without cattle, will be shot. No women or children will be allowed in the territory; they will be driven back to their people or fired upon."

It was 1904; the century was young, an infant still. Over the years it ripened and matured, and in the mellowness and comfort of its wine we all too easily forgot the fragile freshness of its grapes. The Namibian Territory was firmly in foreign hands. As the years passed more and more nations became free, and it became fashionable to speak of the attainment of independence, as if those from whom it

(The President)

had been torn away had never had the right to possess it. In its middle age our century was generous, seeing the community of free nations burgeon manifold, but it was not to deny itself the final vindication of our trust at its close. And so in its ember years it finally remedied an injustice that was perpetrated well before it began, an injustice whose brutality was barbarized infinitely in the space of its own time. The 1990s see Namibia free.

We have seen all the guises of colonialism upon these shores: the conqueror who attempted to bear the sword in one hand, with the Bible in the other; the merchant who paid for what he found easy to exploit with the currency of his power; the politician who caused division because the many are always the easier to rule. Namibia, yes, Namibia was a victim of all these guises of colonialism. Its vibrant cultural, intellectual and moral tradition was to be stilled. A province on the periphery of extra-continental ambition, it suddenly found itself, through an accident of a distant war, colonized by its neighbour, an instance perhaps unique in history but facilitating the sharpening of the thrust to almost infinitesmally finite a point; and so, as the poet has said, the silence, not the silence after music, but the silence of no more music.

That is how they would have wished it to be. That is where they failed. They sought to make the frontiers of their geography coterminous with the frontiers of their ambition. They sought to domesticate a colonized territory into the perverse vigour of their own iniquitous rules. They sought to encash their moral mandate with the plastic of political poker chips.

And yet in 1946, when a war-weary world set about seeking some semblance of certainty, of stability on a planet it desperately needed to restore, this nation, the Namibian nation, was not forgotten. And when the search was given shape and realization in the character of the United Nations, Namibia, as South West Africa,

(The President)

was there on its very first agenda. The history of Namibia and the history of the United Nations have from that moment intertwined in a manner intimate and intense.

When the Charter of the United Nations was drafted, few could have missed the poignancy of the fact that its every purpose stood brutalized in Namibia; every opportunity it promised the human person, including enjoying a future, was denied in Namibia before it could even begin to be born. It determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, while children in Namibia continued to be born into bloodshed. It reaffirmed faith in fundamental human rights, while the right to humanity itself was denied in Namibia. It spoke of the promotion of social progress in a larger freedom, when freedom in its most basic sense of political independence was refused to Namibia. Every tenet the United Nations held sacred was squandered, every principle was pauperized, violence was done to every value.

And so, almost simultaneously with the adoption of the Charter, the Member States of the United Nations tried to make its principles work for Namibia. Every method and strategem known to international diplomacy was brought into play. Many were open, many were subterranean, but all had a good purpose. In 1946 the General Assembly recommended that Namibia be placed under the international Trusteeship System. In 1950 it sought an advisory opinion from the World Court, which reaffirmed South Africa's obligations and the United Nations responsibility. Ten years later two Member States on behalf of Africa sought to challenge South Africa directly in the Court. In 1961 an immediate United Nations presence in Namibia was recommended. In 1966 only two members of the General Assembly voted against a resolution to terminate the South African Mandate over Namibia. One was South Africa and the other was Portugal. That was a momentous year in many senses.

There are colleagues of mine in the Council's Bureau who participated in those first efforts, which finally and formally placed Namibia where South African

(The President)

intransigence had compelled it to be: in the custody of the United Nations. Vice-Presidents Pele Pejic of Yugoslavia, Chinmaya Gharekhan of India and Hocine Djoudi of Algeria have told me of the sense of tangible, almost physical, purpose they felt as young diplomats at that time. The creation in 1967 of what was then the United Nations Council for South West Africa was a decisive and courageous act of innovation by a world body determined not to be weakened by the flab and frailty of its predecessor.

I have mentioned the importance of 1966, and I should not be doing that year justice if I failed to mention another important fact about it. For while diplomacy sought a painless path to Namibian freedom, Namibians themselves were not prepared to rest in expectation. That was the year the People's Liberation Army of Namibia came into being, and a physical struggle on the ground commenced to challenge the insolence of might in the coin of careful, deliberate retaliation.

(The President)

It is important to appreciate the simultaneity - indeed, congruence - of those developments. It is important also to realize that what was done in 1967 had still not precluded South Africa from respecting and responding to the will of the world community. Had the Pretoria régime simply withdrawn from Namibia, the Council could have fulfilled its original mandate, essentially administrative, and provided the model of international co-operation that was eventually to come a quarter of a century later. In the event, South Africa chose not to, and the Council's role became increasingly focused on more diverse - and compelling - responsibilities.

I must pause here to speak of the remarkable evolution and continuity of the Council's programmes and activities. Like all United Nations bodies, the Council existed as an institution essentially in theory; in practice it was composed of countries, Member States of the United Nations. This is true of all United Nations bodies, but there is a difference, in that other bodies deal with fresh issues, fresh problems, within a defined framework or mandate. The Council, on the other hand, was possessed of a single issue, and in its endeavour to fulfil its mandate it had to demonstrate an incredible amount of innovation, imagination and ingenuity.

I need refer only to the Council's conscious decisions to seek participation in international bodies, to enter into particular treaties and agreements, to launch and to sustain a programme of direct assistance, with careful detail, to even remote areas of human resource development. In a category by itself, of course, is the landmark Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia, which gave the Council a personality that can effect international law.

Throughout its existence the Council has had the benefit of the advice and suggestions of the representatives of the Namibian people themselves, especially you, Mr. President. To this have been added the wisdom and first-hand experience

(The President)

of newly independent States, particularly the front-line States, which could anticipate what free Namibia would need and what the Council could do for it. They infused the Council's own efforts and in many cases lent it direction.

Mr. President, you were always a steady guiding spirit in our work. You were always confident that the end of the struggle of the Namibian people and the efforts of the Council could only be crowned with victory. Your wisdom gave us courage in our work.

As I gaze around at today's gathering I see men and women who yesterday had nothing to cling on to except hope and confidence in the justice of their cause. All of them worked very closely with the Council, and today they stand at the threshold of a new era, with the fate of Namibia and its people in their hands.

It is tempting to speak at length about the Council and all that it has done. It is not easy. And perhaps I, as a not too disinterested individual, should not do so before this not too disinterested gathering. I hope with fervour and sincerity, however, that a scrupulous and objective history of the Council will one day be written. We owe ourselves nothing less.

It will be a history studded with memories: of men and women, great in their time who helped us to be; of those who died while still in our midst - and memory bows for a moment at the names of Sean McBride and Bernt Carlsson, two of our Commissioners, and Rego Monteiro, one of our outstanding Secretaries; of men and women whom the Council was able to reach, to persuade - the scholars and statesmen, the writers and the readers, the trade unionists and the churchmen; of our many shared moments of companionship and camaraderie; of friendships forged in the furnace of a mission sustained by our many individual selves; of the love and the laughter that infused our work; of the many personal friendships that the sharing of this cause and the harmony of our work together afforded; of how the fire of our

(The President)

determination smelted the steel of solidarity amongst all of us, distant though our nations may have been, unhappy though relations between us may have been on occasion. Namibia made us one.

How fitting then that the very start of the Preamble to Namibia's Constitution should say that

> "recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is indispensable for freedom, justice and peace"!

How fitting that the citizens of this great nation should identify themselves first as citizens of the earth, of the world that worked so arduously and in harmony for their cause!

We see the following contrasts: yesterday the savagery of war casting brothers asunder; today the promise of peace and conciliation; yesterday pillage and pilferage that impoverished a plentiful land; today national command of national resources. Yesterday the eyes of children asked "Why is this happening to us?" And the weathered faces creased with age had no reply. Today a fresh breath of life has blown into a proud and ancient land.

For the United Nations Council for Namibia, this is journey's end. We had wished a briefer, swifter journey. There were times when the sea around us was rough, when our ship almost sank. But we are glad not to have missed this voyage and this occasion. And so Namibia returns to those to whom it belongs. We hope we held it in trust safely and well. Comrade President, remember us as we cherish our memories of working with you. Our mission is over. Our single crowded hour of glorious life has for us meant far more than age without a name.

While our mandate has terminated, our determined support for this new nation will continue. Before the General Assembly finally dissolves us, the United

(The President)

Nations Council for Namibia has come to seek guidance from the new Government on how to handle some unfinished business still in the Council's hands: implementation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia; transitional arrangements for the United Nations Institute for Namibia; transitional arrangements for the Nationhood Programme for Namibia and its component parts; and the transfer to the Government of Namibia of assets that the Council holds. This forms the agenda of these special, last meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia. From here we make recommendations to the General Assembly, which after hearing us will formally dissolve us, as it created us. We have come to gain wisdom which will enable us to make an informed judgement on the basis of the interests of the Government and people of Namibia, as seen by those who now guide this nation to the greatness for which it is destined.

MESSAGES TO THE COUNCIL

The PRESIDENT: I invite Mr. Hassan Gad-Elhaq, representative of the current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to read a message from Mr. Hosni Mubarak, President of the Arab Republic of Egypt and current Chairman of the OAU.

Mr. GAD-ELHAQ (Egypt) (interpretation from Arabic): I have the honour to convey to the Council the greetings of President Hosni Mubarak, current Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, who has asked me to read out the following message addressed to the Council:

"At this historic turning point in the struggle of the Namibian people, a fraternal people which has just seen the birth of its independent nation, I am pleased to address to you on behalf of the whole of Africa our warmest congratulations on this great achievement. The dawn of freedom for struggling Namibia has truly been the fruit of the sacrifice of this valiant people, under the leadership of its organization, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). Under the wise leadership of the tenacious father, Sam Nujoma, Namibia's independence also testifies to the effective role of the United Nations and its great efforts in order that the Territory might attain independence. Its role was unique, for the United Nations assumed direct responsibility, compared with other liberation causes the Organization has sponsored since its creation.

"Since Namibia came under the United Nations mandate following the Second World War the international community has acted to preserve Namibia's political identity. Thus in 1946 the United Nations rejected an attempt by South Africa to annex the Territory. In 1958 the Organization rejected the idea of partitioning the Territory. History will also record that on 27 October 1966 the General Assembly adopted its resolution putting an end to

(Mr. Gad-Elhaq, Egypt)

South Africa's Mandate over Namibia and placing the Territory under the direct responsibility of the United Nations. The resolution explicitly provided for Namibia's enjoying international status until independence. That decision was taken at a time when the freedom movement was growing in Namibia. The beginning of armed struggle combined with political action was declared on 26 August 1969, and with all those developments it was natural that the United Nations should have recognized the legitimacy of the armed struggle waged by the Namibian people against the South African occupation since the 1960s.

"Moreover, the United Nations started another initiative to ensure the victory of legality in Namibia by creating bodies to support the people of Namibia. Those bodies were headed by the United Nations Council for Namibia, which was created by a decision of the General Assembly in May 1967.

"The United Nations created the Council to act as legal authority to administer the Territory until the racist régime was eliminated and independence was declared. Over a long 23 years in which the Council has held more than 500 meetings the Council has closely followed developments in the region and has drawn the international community's attention to the actions of the racist régime. The Council also represented the Territory in international organizations and at international conferences to protect the interests of the African people of Namibia. The United Nations then moved on to the stage of peaceful settlement of the situation. Security Council resolution 385 (1976) called for the Namibian people to be enabled to decide its own future in free elections in the Territory, under United Nations supervision, on the understanding that the elections would be preceded by a United Nations presence in Namibia to enable its people to organize itself

(Mr. Gad-Elhaq, Egypt)

politically to take part in them. Then we had Security Council resolutions 431 (1978) and 432 (1978), both of 27 July 1978. The first included the plan for a peaceful settlement and the second was devoted to the need to safeguard Namibia's territorial integrity and national unity by reintegrating Walvis Bay into it.

(Mr. Gad-Elhaq, Egypt)

"The same year, faced with South Africa's intransigence, the Security Council adopted resolution 435 (1978) of 29 September 1978, finalizing the international plan for the peaceful settlement of the question of Namibia.

"The role played by the international community as a whole - its firm commitment to, and decisive support for, the cause of freedom in Namibia - has indeed been remarkable, constituting a healthy phenomenon which characterizes the current international political scene.

"This phenomenon is seen in the increasing reliance on working within the United Nations at the global level and using the United Nations for co-operation between the members of the world community. It is perhaps the first positive result of the ebbing of the cold war and the end of the age of polarization from which mankind has suffered for the past 40 years, and which led to struggle and confrontation between peoples.

"We hope that Namibia's accession to independence marks the start of a new phase in the final battle to put an end to apartheid and its practices, which violate human rights, and to establish democracy and social peace, based on justice, in South Africa. South Africa must draw the lesson of Namibia's independence, become aware of the facts of the international situation and implement the resolutions of the sixteenth special session of the General Assembly, which expressed the will of the international community.

"Africa is holding out its hand for international co-operation in order to consolidate the post-apartheid community, to assure a better future for all the peoples of Africa.

"Namibia's accession to independence is a victory not only for its valiant people, but also for independent Africa and for freedom-loving and peace-loving peoples the world over.

(Mr. Gad-Elhaq, Egypt)

"On this occasion we urge the international community to give all necessary assistance to the people of Namibia to help it consolidate its independence; to give every assistance to the United Nations Office of High Commissioner for Refugees in order to facilitate the repatriation of Namibian refugees; and to give all necessary assistance to the young State of Namibia, including international aid for projects and programmes to reconstruct the country and restore its economy, in the interests of the Namibian people.

"Africa is today more than ever convinced that the United Nations embodies a cherished dream of mankind - the creation of international co-operation and solidarity to prevent the disintegration of civilization and to promote peace, development and progress."

The PRESIDENT: I now invite Mr. Dragoslav Pejic, representative of the Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, to read out a message from Mr. Janek Drnovsek, President of the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and Chairman of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): Allow me first to express my delegation's great satisfaction at the opportunity to be here at this time, when the Council for Namibia is winding down its successful work on the soil of an independent, free Namibia, and to say that we were all gratified to hear the inspiring speech that the President, Sam Nujoma, has just delivered to the Council at this solemn moment. His presence at this meeting and his inspiring speech bring back memories of many addresses and speeches he has made to the Council over the past 23 years. For many of us who have been associated with the Council for practically all those years all our contacts with him - as the leader of his people and the leader of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) - have been not only encouraging,

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but inspiring; they have inspired the Council to persevere in its endeavours to give full assistance and support - political and material - to the heroic struggle of the Namibian people.

I am very glad that we are now meeting in this proud, free and independent State. Much is said now about the United Nations contribution to Namibia's independence, but the struggle of the people of Namibia for its independence throughout these years, a struggle recently crowned with success, has also contributed greatly to the strengthening of the United Nations itself, in securing its principles and its objectives of solving various international political and economic problems.

On behalf of my delegation, I wish every success to the President, Government and people of Namibia in their further endeavours to build their country.

I wish now to read out the message of Dr. Janek Drnovsek, President of the Presidency of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, who is the current Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement. It reads as follows:

"The special plenary meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia, which is taking place following the proclamation of the independence of Namibia, offers me an opportunity to extend, on behalf of Yugoslavia and in my capacity as the current Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement, most sincere congratulations to the Council on the contribution it has made to Namibia's gaining of independence.

"From the time it was given the mandate by the world Organization in 1967 to administer the Territory of Namibia until its independence, the Council for Namibia initiated and carried out numerous actions in an endeavour to contribute to the achievement of that objective. Today, when, owing to the efforts made over the years by the Member States of the United Nations and by

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

the Non-Aligned Movement, with which the Council co-operated in many respects, the United Nations plan for Namibia has been implemented, and when freedom and independence have become a reality for its people, we must give credit to the Council for its tireless and devoted activity aimed at protecting the interests of Namibia and creating conditions for its further development.

"At the same time, this contribution by the Council represents a victory of the principles the United Nations has stood for since it was founded, and a great success and a shining example of co-operation of the entire international community.

"The independence of this last colonial Territory brings the long-standing process of decolonization almost to an end. At the same time, in southern Africa, where new positive processes have already begun, more favourable conditions and new opportunities are being created for that part of the world, too, to be fully integrated into the current world democratic trends. We hope that in the near future the peoples and all the citizens in that part of Africa will be able to enjoy free and unhampered development, with full respect for all human rights and their needs.

"I wish to point out that the Non-Aligned Movement will, as always in the past, make its contribution to the achievement of this goal."

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.

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UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 539th MEETING

Held at Swawek Hall, Windhoek, Namibia
on Tuesday, 10 April 1990, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. ZUZE (Zambia)

Adoption of the agenda

Report on the activities of the United Nations Council for Namibia since its establishment in fulfilment of its mandate with respect to Namibia [2]

Consideration of the status report on the implementation of Decree No. 1 for the protection of the natural resources of Namibia [3]

Consideration of the transitional arrangements for the United Nations Institute for Namibia [4]

Consideration of the Nationhood Programme for Namibia and its component parts [5]

General debate

This record is subject to correction.

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Any corrections to the record of this meeting will be issued in a corrigendum.

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The meeting was called to order at 10.30 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

AGENDA ITEMS 2 TO 5

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN FULFILMENT OF ITS MANDATE WITH RESPECT TO NAMIBIA

CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECREE NO. 1 FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF NAMIBIA

CONSIDERATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR NAMIBIA

CONSIDERATION OF THE NATIONHOOD PROGRAMME FOR NAMIBIA AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS

GENERAL DEBATE

The PRESIDENT: We shall now begin the general debate. Bearing in mind the large number of speakers and the limited time available, I appeal to representatives to limit their statements to no more than 10 minutes.

Mr. MIMOUNI (Algeria) (interpretation from French): For all those of us who have been untiring in our multifaceted support for the Namibian people, words cannot express our feelings today as we hail an independent Namibia. I take this opportunity to express my delegation's warmest congratulations to the people and Government of Namibia on this happy occasion and to say how much we rejoice at finding ourselves at their side today on Namibian soil, free and sovereign at last.

In that connection, my delegation expresses its warmest gratitude to President Sam Nujoma, who honoured our meeting yesterday with his presence and his very important statement. His presence, and that of the Prime Minister, other members of the Government and members of the Namibian Parliament who have been here since the opening meeting, despite their important duties, is encouraging to us. Today my delegation is particularly pleased to welcome the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Netumbo Ndaitnah.

(Mr. Mimouni, Algeria)

On 21 March 1990 the whole world turned its eyes towards Windhoek and felt itself united with Namibia as that country celebrated its independence. We are certain that that long-awaited day will for ever stand as a landmark in the history of the liberation of peoples.

The birth of the Republic of Namibia was the natural and logical culmination of the long, heroic national liberation struggle of its people, under the enlightened leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO). After nearly a century of domination and repression, the Namibian people have given an exemplary demonstration of their resolve to regain their dignity and freedom and to exercise their legitimate national rights on their own soil. Their struggle for national independence is in many respects one of the finest chapters in the history of the liberation of peoples. By their sacrifices they have shown their firm determination to restore their national rights.

The people then did justice to the merits of SWAPO and its leaders, who had led them with courage, wisdom and clear-sightedness in their struggle until the ultimate goal was achieved. That achievement symbolizes the irreversible nature of the liberation movement and demonstrates once again that a people's enjoyment and exercise of their rights to self-determination, national independence and freedom cannot be ignored for ever.

Algeria, which since its own independence has expressed its solidarity with, and unconditional support for, the valiant struggle of the Namibian people, rejoices in the establishment of the Namibian nation with the birth of its own State, and is proud to have been the first country to recognize the Republic of Namibia and to establish diplomatic relations with it, relations that we are sure will further help to strengthen the bonds of friendship and co-operation between our two countries.

(Mr. Mimouni, Algeria)

Above all, the victory of the Namibian people is a victory for the international community - Africa in particular - which has always proclaimed its solidarity with the struggle. It is also a victory for the United Nations, whose very history is a record of support for the Namibian cause and whose outstanding contribution to the decolonization of that Territory is one of its finest and most important achievements.

For the United Nations Council for Namibia this victory marks the triumph, at last, of its collective commitment to the Namibian cause since 1966, when the United Nations solemnly undertook to assume direct responsibility over the Namibian Territory through the Council and to bring the liberation process to a successful conclusion. Through its tireless efforts, its timely initiatives and its valuable assistance programme, the Council for Namibia has discharged its mandate in an exemplary fashion. By its praiseworthy activities it has demonstrated its utter and unswerving commitment to promoting and defending the interests of the Namibian people. It played a crucial role in mobilizing world public opinion, making the call of the Namibian people for their national rights heard at the international level. By endorsing that struggle, the Council made a great contribution to the realization of the cherished dream of the Namibian people. By holding its last meetings on Namibian soil here in Windhoek, the Council has sought to give one final demonstration of the fact that the noble mission in which it has had the honour and privilege to be engaged has been accomplished.

In attaining its independence Namibia has written a glorious page in its history and has taken its rightful place, on an equal footing, among the sovereign nations of the world. It is now looking and working towards the future, to consolidate its sovereignty and to promote its development. We are convinced that

(Mr. Mimouni, Algeria)

Namibia will be able to draw upon the special strengths of its people and on the skills of its leaders to win fresh victories in its struggle fully to regain its territorial integrity, strengthen its independence and promote its own development.

In conclusion, I should like to take this opportunity to repeat to the sister Republic of Namibia and its leaders, and through them to its courageous people, our assurance of the unswerving support and solidarity of the people and Government of Algeria in everything they do.

Mr. AKSIN (Turkey): It is a particular pleasure for my delegation to address this special plenary meeting of our Council. I begin by paying a special tribute to you, Mr. President. You have always guided the Council's work with wisdom and great professional skill. At a time when the historic responsibility of the Council stands fulfilled, we should like to place on record our admiration for your important contribution to the achievement of this result.

I should also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the secretariat of the Council for Namibia for backing up the Council's work with hard work and devotion to our common cause.

Finally, let me express our deep gratitude to the Namibian authorities for hosting the special plenary meetings in this historic city of Windhoek. We are especially thankful for the warm welcome we have received in this beautiful country and for the excellent arrangements, which will ensure the success of our meeting.

These meetings, at the end of which the Council for Namibia will recommend to the General Assembly its own dissolution, have a special meaning. Our Council's mandate was fulfilled with the accession of Namibia to independence on 21 March 1990. On this significant occasion we are gathered to mark the end of Namibia's long wait as Africa's last colony and to celebrate the birth of the youngest member of the family of nations.

The year-long transition to independence, within the framework of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), has been monitored by the United Nations under the steady guidance of the Secretary-General. For more than two decades the question of the independence of Namibia has been one of the major concerns of our Organization. In this connection, Mr. Perez de Cuellar generously recognized in his statement at Namibia's independence celebrations that great credit was due to the devoted work done by our Council. Indeed, since its establishment in 1967 by

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

the General Assembly as the only authority to administer the Territory, the Council for Namibia has been carrying out activities aimed at mobilizing international support for the termination of South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia and backing the heroic struggle of the people of the Territory, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), for their national liberation.

As members of the Council, we have been proud to serve the Namibian people during all these years. But today, as we witness the culmination of the long and valiant fight of the Namibians for their freedom, we feel a special joy in our hearts. We salute the people of Namibia for the determination and heroism with which they have struggled during so many years for their national dignity.

We also pay a warm tribute to the inspiring leader of this young nation, Mr. Sam Nujoma, who spent 30 years in exile and who now stands vindicated after his election as Namibia's first President. The smooth transition of this country to independence has been made possible thanks to his maturity and statesmanship. As this brilliant leader stated in his inaugural speech, the destiny of Namibia is now fully in its own hands. The Namibian people can look forward to the future with confidence and hope.

The restoration to the Namibian people of their right to independence is an auspicious development, which also signifies a rollback of apartheid in this part of the world. In neighbouring South Africa the Government has failed, so far, to produce those changes that would lead to the termination of institutionalized racism. We hope that Namibia will serve as an example of justice, democracy and tolerance for its southern neighbour.

My country, Turkey, has enthusiastically supported from the beginning the just cause of the African peoples, and was among the co-sponsors of the 1960 General Assembly resolution aimed at ending colonialism. In this spirit, Turkey has steadfastly supported the independence efforts of the Namibian people aimed at

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

removing this last vestige of colonialism in Africa. Within this framework, as was reiterated in the press release issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkey on the occasion of the independence of Namibia, Turkey was highly gratified to recognize the Republic of Namibia and to establish diplomatic relations with it.

Long live Namibia! May it enjoy peace and prosperity!

Mr. EYOMA ITA EYOMA (Nigeria): On behalf of the Government and people of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, most warmly on presiding over this historic meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia, taking place here on the soil of a free and independent Namibia. I am sure that when the history of the struggle of the Namibian people to be free is fully written, the role played by the Council, your great country, Zambia, you and your very worthy and able predecessors will feature prominently.

Namibia, that Territory which was entrusted to the Council to administer until independence, is finally free, sovereign and independent. Twenty-three years ago the United Nations assumed direct responsibility for Namibia and established our Council as the legal Administering Authority for the Territory. On 21 March this year that responsibility was fulfilled and fully discharged with the birth of the Republic of Namibia as a sovereign and independent nation. Namibia's struggle for freedom was, as President Sam Nujoma so eloquently stated in his inaugural address, "a fitting tribute to the heroism and tenacity" of the Namibian people. It is, to paraphrase President Nujoma, a welcome and laudable culmination of many years of consistent support for the Namibian cause by the international community.

(Mr. Eyoma Ita Eyoma, Nigeria)

For Nigeria, and, I believe, other members of the Council, Namibia's independence is an occasion for special joy and celebration. It is a great achievement in the annals of the history of the United Nations as a whole. The Council can indeed take justifiable pride in this happy event, as the agency through which the United Nations kept the just and righteous cause of the Namibian people in the conscience and consciousness of mankind. As a pioneer and proud member of the Council, Nigeria is delighted to have been closely involved with the activities of the Council and, indeed, the entire United Nations efforts to decolonize Namibia, Africa's last colony.

(Mr. Eyoma Ita Eyoma, Nigeria)

The President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida, personally represented the Nigerian nation at the ceremonies marking Namibia's independence. He seized the opportunity of his visit to convey to his brother, President Nujoma, and the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia the warm and fraternal felicitations of the Government and people of Nigeria on the achievement of Namibia's freedom and independence. My delegation would therefore simply reiterate those sentiments already conveyed to our Namibian brethren. Namibia's deliverance from oppression and exploitation indeed marks a new era and the rise of a new star on the African continent, a continent which has suffered the worst ravages of colonial exploitation and subjugation in the history of mankind.

As we gather here in what may turn out to be the Council's last formal meeting, as we engage in an act of mutual self-congratulation, let us not forget that the baby that has just been born will need a lot of tender, loving care to develop into a full adult.

While the Council has an impressive record of assistance to the people of Namibia, we must urgently call on the international community to extend generous assistance to Namibia in the economic and social fields. Massive efforts must be made to ensure that jobs are created, the socio-economic infrastructure is improved, and sufficient education, housing and health facilities are provided to remedy the ravages of apartheid and colonialism. Agriculture, mining and fisheries have to be improved and made to offer opportunities to all Namibians. On our part, we must ensure that ongoing programmes for the development of human resources are continued and completed, in fulfilment of our responsibilities, in consultation with the Government of Namibia.

(Mr. Eyoma Ita Eyoma, Nigeria)

It is Nigeria' unshakeable position that the indivisibility and territorial integrity of Namibia, a concept the Council has fought for all along, must be restored and respected. In this connection, we must underscore our position that Walvis Bay, the Penguin Islands and all other offshore islands must be part and parcel of the Republic of Namibia. The Namibian Government and people deserve the unalloyed support of the international community to secure their territorial integrity. We urge the Security Council and the General Assembly to reiterate their position in this regard and get South Africa to respect international law.

Now that our mandate stands fulfilled we must remember that a proper handing over has to be done. The unresolved issue of the enforcement of Decree No. 1 has to be properly handed over to the new Government, after thorough briefing. Similarly, the huge archives of studies and reports has to be handed over.

An issue to which my delegation has always devoted attention is the fate and future of the staff of the Council secretariat and the Office of the Commissioner for Namibia. Now that the mandate has been achieved and Namibia is free, the staff who served the Council and the cause of peace and justice have to be adequately taken care of if they are not to become victims of injustice themselves. In this regard, we trust that the Secretary-General will do his utmost to redeploy and reabsorb the staff, as appropriate, on the basis of existing regulations. Even in borderline cases where the regulations might be a bit blurred, we hope that a compassionate and fair interpretation and ruling will be made by the Secretary-General.

This statement would be incomplete if I did not pay tribute to the Namibian people, who, through their Constituent Assembly and political parties, elevated the politics of reconciliation to new heights in Africa. Theirs is a shining example. The Government and people of Nigeria would also like to put on record their deep appreciation of the support of the front-line States, the Organization of African

(Mr. Eyoma Ita Eyoma, Nigeria)

Unity and the Non-Aligned Movement, with which we worked so closely to complement the efforts of the people of Namibia in their struggle. We also recognize and commend the efforts of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, and all others associated with the ultimate success of the gargantuan and epic struggle. Finally, we especially commend the South West Africa People's Organization, the ruling political party, for the foresight and imagination of its leadership, both during the struggle and at independence.

Namibia is free. The Council's responsibilities have been discharged. Nevertheless, much remains to be done. The Government and people of Nigeria stand poised to make their own contribution.

Mr. PEJIC (Yugoslavia): It is a great pleasure for my delegation, and for me personally, to participate in these closing meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia here in Windhoek, where a new independent and sovereign State - the Republic of Namibia - was born only a few weeks ago.

First, let me again thank Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, for his statement and warm words of welcome, reflecting his country's recognition of our work, as well as for the exceptional hospitality we have received here from the Government and people of his beautiful land.

Our plenary meetings, in Windhoek are an exceptional occasion. After almost a quarter of a century of the Council's efforts to promote the cause of Namibia in various fields, we are finally presented with the opportunity to congratulate the people of Namibia on its successful, heroic struggle to free itself from the yoke of colonialism and the scourge of apartheid. This was a long and brave struggle in which almost every sacrifice had to be made. Yet, surely and inevitably, the great day of final victory has arrived. And just as it showed courage in the days of

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

hardship and adversity, the Namibian people demonstrated wisdom and maturity when peace arrived; in the final phase of the independence process and at the ballot box and subsequently in the Constituent Assembly, it opted for democracy.

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

As Namibia has acceded to independence, the mandate of the Council for Namibia has ended. For decades the question of Namibia was one of the priority political issues on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Security Council. In fact, the issue permeated the activities of the entire Organization, and the Council has been in the forefront of those activities ever since its creation. The Council was the moving force that, through its commitment in the political field, through countless programmes of assistance to the Namibian people and by spreading the word of its struggle, determined most decidedly the content and format of the work of the United Nations with respect to Namibia.

My country, Yugoslavia, is proud to have been on the Council for all those years, and to have made its contribution to the heroic struggle of the people of Namibia for its independence and freedom.

For the non-aligned countries Namibia's independence has special significance. The Namibian cause was among the top priorities in their overall activities in the United Nations since the Movement's foundation back in 1961. I think that I share the feelings of all of us in expressing satisfaction that our efforts over a long period, which culminated in the past two years in the activities of non-aligned countries in the Security Council and in the framework of the Group of 18 have been rewarded.

The road to Namibia's independence was long and difficult. The role that the United Nations played in that process was unprecedented. It is therefore only natural to say that Namibia's accession to independence is one of the most significant achievements of the world Organization. Of course, this young nation is now faced with new challenges. Namibia's sovereignty and security must not be threatened and its full territorial integrity must be ensured. Substantial assisance and support are necessary to enable the Namibian people to recover from decades-long colonial exploitation and to step forward on the road of development

(Mr. Pejic, Yugoslavia)

and prosperity. The United Nations is duty-bound to enlist the international community in this noble undertaking. There is no doubt in my mind that the States making up the Council, represented here, will spare no effort and will address themselves with the same determination to achieve those goals as they did in the past.

And finally, as I wind up this roll-call of sorts of those who have distinguished themselves in the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia, one contribution stands out and must not go unrecognized: your own personal contribution, Mr. President. The diplomatic skill, political wisdom and dynamism with which you have conducted the Council's deliberations through many trials and tribulations will long be remembered. It has been a great pleasure and satisfaction for me to work with you.

The PRESIDENT: I have also enjoyed working with you, Sir. I have benefited from that silvery hair, which is testimony to your wisdom and long experience at the United Nations. We have both struggled, and I think we have both succeeded.

Mr. MENON (India): We meet today in Windhoek, independent Namibia's capital, to pay tribute to the people and Government of Namibia. We wish to express to them our gratitude and appreciation for their generous hospitality and to you, Mr. President, and to the organizers of these meetings our thanks for a job well done.

In freedom, Namibia joins us in the international community, along with its African brethren, and now strengthens the forces of independence in Africa and brithgens the beacon for change in South Africa in particular. The struggle, the heroism and the triumph of the people of Namibia testify to the inevitability of progress where justice, goodwill and determination demand it.

(Mr. Menon, India)

India, which first spoke out against South African policies back in 1946, is proud to have been associated with Namibia's independence struggle. Today, 44 years later, we rejoice in the birth of the Republic of Namibia and congratulate its nationals on their achievements. The presence of our Prime Minister, Mr. V. P. Singh, at Namibia's independence celebrations last month symbolized how we share Namibian exultation.

This occasion also commends the role of the United Nations, inextricably linked in sympathy and solidarity with the Namibian cause. This role reaffirmed the essential principles of anti-colonialism and national independence that the world community has enshrined in history, and it displayed a triumphant instance of the collective will of nations in the various organs of the United Nations, whose activities in many phases of the struggle were often decisive. From the revoking of South Africa's Mandate in 1966 and the creation of the Council for Namibia in 1967, from the advisory opinions of the International Court of Justice in 1950 and 1971, to the implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978) last year, our community of nations has worked for decolonization and for the furtherance of the Namibian cause. We pay particular tribute to the Secretary-General and to the various organs of the United Nations for their efforts in making this strenuous and long-drawn-out operation a success. My country was privileged to participate in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, which played a central role in Namibia's passage to independence.

Today, we in the Council come to what we could consider the fulfilment of our mandate. We have played, as best we could, the role assigned to us and executed our responsibilities to the extent circumstances permitted. We can now say with great satisfaction that these responsibilities have passed to the popularly elected Government of the Republic of Namibia. Indeed, in many ways it was the Namibian

(Mr. Menon, India)

people themselves who inspired the Council's efforts and gave it strength, meaning and destination.

Now I look back a little in history. The Council for Namibia worked with dedication in handling Namibian interests, defending and nurturing them through difficult times, as well as in promoting certain aspects of Namibian self-reliance. We should like to record our appreciation in particular of some of the Council's programmes designed to enhance and develop Namibia's human resources that would prepare it to take on the reins of government and development in as viable a manner as possible immediately after independence. Under the various accounts of the Fund for Namibia, the Council and the Office of the Commissioner for Namibia trained several thousand Namibians in vocational and practical fields, and provided opportunities for on-the-job experience to many others. Their accumulated skills will play a useful role in the building of a new nation.

(Mr. Menon, India)

The Council also worked assiduously for the protection of Namibian economic interests and of its natural resources, both land-based and marine. In its most visible form, it succeeded it drawing world attention to the plunder of those resources, especially the uranium mines, and the ruthless exploitation of Namibian manpower. In insisting that the world community respect the relevant decree - the well-known Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia - as international law, the Council demanded international compliance with a critical United Nations concern: the protection of Namibia's resources.

Tribute must also be paid to those who have worked in various positions in the office of the Commissioner for Namibia. Often in adverse circumstances, they contributed effectively towards preserving and strengthening the underpinnings of the great effort to secure Namibian independence.

But, more than what any of us could have done, there was, as I have said, the determination, courage and endurance of the Namibian people themselves, and of their political focus in the South West Africa People's Organization, which embodied Namibian aspirations abroad and within the country for so many years.

Now, in independence, the country faces up to the many difficult and complex challenges of freedom, especially those of security and development. In tackling them, independent Namibia has the offer of my country's full support. India has already opened a High Commission in Windhoek and nominated a High Commissioner, symbols for us that vindicate the stand we took back in 1946, when we spoke up for the Namibian people's right to independence. Our Prime Minister recently announced an assistance package of about $12 million to help Namibia in its nation-building efforts, along with concessional credit for the supply of goods and services, and training and technical assistance facilities in the fields of civil administration and education.

(Mr. Menon, India)

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to reiterate its support for Namibia's territorial integrity and security. Here I refer to Walvis Bay and the offshore islands which have yet to be restored to Namibia, and the delineation of its southern borders. We call upon all peace-loving people of the world to support the Namibian people in working for those objectives.

Namibia's independence shifts the international struggle against apartheid to South Africa's boundaries. The Pretoria régime has in recent weeks professed a desire for beneficial change in its racist policies, and has taken some measures that were necessary and long overdue. But much more needs to be done. Apartheid's miasma continues to paralyse the majority in that country. Reluctant half-measures are not the answer; the answer is the rooting out of apartheid. We trust that Namibia's triumph, testifying to irresistible historical progress towards majority rule, will spur the liberation of South Africa's shackled majority.

In conclusion, I reiterate our warm greetings to Namibia. We look forward to welcoming it as the 160th Member of the United Nations. And we wish it success in its efforts at nation-building and at participating in the international community's efforts to consolidate peace, security, understanding and justice among nations.

Mr. INSANALLY (Guyana): Here in Windhoek one cannot help but experience a sense of history in the making. On 21 March last, after 75 years of bondage to South Africa, the free and independent nation of Namibia was born. It was an occasion for great rejoicing to see this major vestige of colonialism removed from the African continent. The euphoria of this event lives on as we, the members of the Council for Namibia, the legal administering body for the Territory until its recent independence, now meet in special session to celebrate this triumph of the Namibian people.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

Established in 1967 by the General Assembly, the Council has for more than two decades championed the Namibian cause. Over this period it has carried out a wide gamut of activities, designed to advance the Territory to independence. This is neither the time nor the place to chronicle them in any detail. Suffice it to say that their cumulative effect has been the creation of circumstances in which Namibia could be quickly and safely brought to nationhood. The Council can therefore be fully satisfied now that the important tasks assigned to it have been successfully completed.

As a member of the Council, Guyana has always endeavoured to play an active role in Namibia's struggle for freedom. In 1974 it had the distinct honour of exercising the presidency of the Council. It has also had the privilege of providing education and training to a number of young Namibians who will now be expected to contribute to their country's development. We have similarly been pleased to provide personnel for the United Nations Transition Assistance Group, which worked to ensure the Territory's smooth passage to independence. Our commitment to Namibia is thus unfailing and unstinting.

We are therefore especially happy to be present for these special meetings at the invitation of the Government and people of Namibia. To them, through the Deputy Foreign Minister, who is with us today, we convey our warmest congratulations and fraternal good wishes as they join our family of free nations. We assure them of our continuing friendship and co-operation in the post-independence era. In so doing, I merely echo the sentiments which have already been expressed to the President of Namibia by the Prime Minister of Guyana when he came to participate in the official independence celebrations.

Like other States of the international community, we stand ready to encourage and assist Namibia as it proceeds to translate its political autonomy into economic independence. After the ravages inflicted by decades of colonial plunder, this is

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

by no means an easy challenge. Namibia is, however, fortunate in that it possesses appreciable natural resources which could guarantee the economic prosperity of all Namibians. There is therefore an urgent need for the international community to offer whatever assistance it can to allow Namibia to enjoy the fruits of its independence. In this context we are pleased to learn of a proposal to host an international support conference very shortly in New York for this purpose.

Although on the verge of dissolution, the Council has a residual role in promoting such assistance. Indeed, the primary aim of these special meetings, as they were originally conceived, was to highlight the needs of the newly independent nation of Namibia and to appeal for international co-operation to satisfy them. The Council must also strive to ensure that all projects now under way for the benefit of Namibia are satisfactorily terminated. We must also ensure that Decree No. 1 is reinforced so that Namibia's resources are preserved for the benefit of its people. With such a diligent effort, the Council will have written the final chapter of its existence and discharged its historic responsibility to the full.

It is an irony of history that, contrary to the intention of General Assembly resolution 2248 (S-V), the Council was not able to come to Namibia prior to the Territory's independence. It was, as a consequence, obliged to administer the Territory *in absentia* and in the teeth of fierce opposition on the part of South Africa. Nevertheless, it is fair to say that it has discharged its duties to the best of its ability and to the credit of the United Nations. Already the Namibian experience is suggestive of a larger role for the world Organization in the decolonization process and, more generally, in the peaceful settlement of disputes. The enhanced prestige of the United Nations will surely attract to it a wider reputation as an effective guarantor of world peace and security.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

The Council's contribution to the happy outcome of Namibia's struggle for freedom is thus a matter of public record. As President for the last three and a half years, you, Sir, deserve much credit for the success of its efforts. On behalf of Guyana and as one privileged to serve with you as a Vice-President, I wish to pay a public tribute to you for your long devotion to the Namibian cause. Our recognition extends of course, to your native Zambia, which has always been in the vanguard of the campaign to end apartheid and colonialism in southern Africa. A word of commendation must also go to the other members of the Council and the secretariat and to the Office of the Commissioner for their untiring labour in a most noble pursuit. Nor must we forget those Namibians who gave their lives to secure a breakthrough for freedom and justice in Namibia and beyond.

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

It is not difficult to imagine the impetus Namibia's independence will give to the liberation struggle now being waged by an oppressed population against racism in South Africa. The final defeat of apartheid in Namibia has sounded the death knell for that evil system within its very fortress. There can be no doubt that, with the rapidly changing political climate in South Africa, majority rule will soon be a reality. The declared commitment of Namibia's new leadership to the anti-apartheid struggle places it among the front-line States strategically placed to put pressure on the Pretoria regime for the abolition of this unholy practice.

For the time being, however, it is enough to pause and savour the victory which has been won in Namibia and to rejoice today over the territory's emergence to freedom and to nationhood. The battle has not been easy, nor the sacrifice small. The high cost of the liberation struggle makes the triumph bitter-sweet to the taste. But, as a Namibian poet declares in a piece entitled "I blame Kara-tuma",

"I refuse this thing
That we should have come
To be the last of all.
It gives me pain.
And I despise
That old man
Of long ago
Who caused it to happen.
I think if I saw him today
I would beat him
But he's dead now
And there's nothing to be done."

(Mr. Insanally, Guyana)

Namibia's unhappy past is for ever behind it now. Ahead is a future full of glorious opportunities. As the representative of Guyana at this special session and as a member of the Council for Namibia, I wish this new nation well so that it might be blessed by its great hero Heitsi Eibeb with abundant peace and prosperity.

Mr. DING Yuanhong (China) (interpretation from Chinese): It is of special significance that the United Nations Council for Namibia has come to the capital of this youngest republic to convene a special session shortly after it achieved its long awaited independence. We are here not only to review the Council's work since its inception but also to take this opportunity to offer our congratulations to the Namibian people. As a member of the Council China has consistently supported the United Nations in its efforts to push forward the Namibian independence process and heartily rejoices over the Namibian people's victory. Here, on behalf of the Chinese delegation, I wish to express our high esteem and sincere congratulations to the people of Namibia. I should also like to express our gratitude to President Nujoma and the Namibian Government for the great attention and active support they have accorded this special session.

The Namibian people were once subjected to prolonged colonial rule, but they never flinched from waging tenacious struggles over those long years to win independence for their country and liberation for their nation. In doing so they sustained enormous sacrifices. The dauntless fighting spirit and bravery of the Namibian people command admiration from people the world over. Namibian independence is the result of the protracted struggle of the Namibian people, but is also inseparable from the powerful support provided by many African States, the front-line States in particular.

With the last remaining colony now formally proclaimed independent, the entire African continent has finally freed itself from colonial domination. This is a major event of great significance and far-reaching impact in the history of human

(Mr. Ding Yuanhong, China)

civilization, which fills the international community with inspiration. As we celebrate the victory of the Namibian people, we are glad to note that during the Namibian independence process the United Nations Council for Namibia made great efforts in fulfilling its obligations. As is pointed out in its report, the United Nations Council for Namibia, conscious of its special and unique responsibility for Namibia, intensified its efforts further to mobilize international action in support of the Namibian people's struggle to achieve self-determination, freedom and national independence in a united Namibia.

In 1967 the United Nations adopted a resolution establishing the Council for Namibia and empowering it to be the legal Administering Authority for Namibia. For 23 years, under its President, the Permanent Representative of Zambia to the United Nations, the Council has done its utmost in all possible areas to mobilize the international community to support the Namibian people's struggle for independence. The Council has participated in the formulation of United Nations policies on Namibia, and its recommendations have often served as the basis for numerous General Assembly resolutions, including such important documents as Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia. Those resolutions and documents have gone a long way in repudiating the illegitimacy and crimes of the colonialists while upholding truth and justice. From the voting records of successive General Assembly sessions on the question of Namibia we may conclude that the people of the world have always stood on the side of the just struggle of the Namibian people, which represented the popular will. In co-operation with the relevant United Nations agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, the Council for Namibia also held countless meetings of one form or another, rallying international opinion for action in support of Namibian independence. We hereby express our commendation of the work

(Mr. Ding Yuanhong, China)

of the Council. On behalf of the Chinese delegation I should also like to express our thanks to you, Mr. President, and all other colleagues in the Council.

The Chinese Government and people have always deeply sympathized with and resolutely supported the Namibian people in their unyielding struggle against colonial rule and for national independence, never wavering in their conviction that the just cause of the Namibian people would triumph in the end. The fact that Namibia immediately established diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China after its independence indicates that the Chinese and Namibian people have in the long years of struggle forged a profound friendship that is bound to be further consolidated and developed on a new foundation. The independence of Namibia has opened a new chapter in the annals of African history, and the Namibian people has also entered a new historical period. We are convinced that, under the leadership of President Nujoma, the Namibian Government and people will continue to achieve fresh victories in their cause of safeguarding national independence and building up their newborn nation.

Mr. PACAVIRA (Angola) (spoke in Portuguese; English text furnished by the delegation): Allow me first of all to associate myself with the great joy felt by the United Nations Council for Namibia as it meets in this special session here in Windhoek and equally to associate myself with the warm and cordial salute addressed to the Namibian people through their authorities here present on the occasion of their independence.

I should also like to congratulate the President of the Council on his initiatives and efforts that have made possible the convening of this last meeting in this land of the Kalahari where we breathe the pure air of true freedom.

On behalf of my Government and in my own name, allow me also to second all the words of appreciation, friendship and militant solidarity that were yesterday addressed to President Sam Nujoma, his Prime Minister and all his Cabinet and Members of Parliament, many of whom are familiar faces, our companions in arms.

We have always been active members of the United Nations Council for Namibia, so we could hardly do better, as we address this important and historic special session, than to identify ourselves with the content of the statements made here by previous speakers, most especially that of His Excellency Ambassador Peter Zuze, Chairman of our Group of Front-line States in New York. It was a historic statement, rich in historical lessons, delineating and analysing the winding paths the Council for Namibia has had to travel in order to fulfil its mandate.

The message delivered to us by President Sam Nujoma was also very worthy of note, for it struck a profound chord in our hearts as representatives to the United Nations of countries that love peace and justice.

In New York we have always been side by side with the President of the United Nations Council for Namibia and the vanguard of the representatives of the struggle of the Namibian people in the United Nations Council for Namibia, in the Co-ordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Countries and in the Group of Front-line

(Mr. Pacavira, Angola)

States, all of us striving together for the independence of this rich territory where we are gathered today to pay our tribute to all who have travelled such a long and difficult road to the salvation of their beloved country, rightfully theirs.

For two decades now the most qualified experts in the skills and art of contemporary diplomacy have been trying in this Council to find the best ways to fulfil its mandate and at the same time to support the Secretary-General in his responsibilities with respect to Namibia, then illegally occupied. We are here today in Windhoek to say to our Namibian brothers and sisters, and to the world, that the United Nations Council for Namibia has accomplished its mission very well indeed. In fact it should be noted, as its President said yesterday, that it was not at all easy for the Council to fulfil its mandate. It was necessary for the international community to act in unison and for all progressive and democratic forces in the world to be mobilized, quite apart from the sacrifice and bloodshed and the fortitude and resolute struggle of the sons and daughters of Namibia thirsting for freedom, peace and stability in the region.

We rejoice. At last Namibia is independent. But the mission of all of us diplomatic representatives to the United Nations and the secretariat of this important international forum is not yet over. There is still much that must be done for this young nation as it joins the community of nations in order to strengthen the State and ensure its stability and the security of its borders.

This is not the place to mention the modest contribution of my country or the sacrifices made by our entire people in harmonious joint efforts and co-ordination among our leaders of the front line and our ever-present Cuban friends towards Namibian independence, which we have come here to celebrate. I should simply like to take this opportunity to assure you that my Government will continue to

(Mr. Pacavira, Angola)

participate in the efforts of the United Nations and the whole international community to safeguard the revolutionary victories of the Namibian people, the consolidation of its nation and the integrity of its territory, despite the fact that the guns have not yet fallen silent in my country, in which major armed confrontations still continue.

We wish this young nation a fine future. Strength and courage to its leaders!

Mr. WISNUMURTI (Indonesia): It is a distinct privilege for me to represent Indonesia at these special plenary meetings of the Council for Namibia. On this occasion I should like to express my deep and sincere appreciation for the hospitality accorded to me by the Government and people of Namibia and for the excellent arrangements made for our deliberations. The decision to meet here in this beautiful city of Windhoek is rendered all the more poignant in that it not only brings us spiritually closer to our Namibian brothers but also allows the Council to be physically present at the historic fulfilment of the mandate entrusted to it by the General Assembly.

We are grateful to President Nujoma for his illuminating opening statement yesterday, and are indebted to him for sharing with us some important aspects of Namibia's efforts in national reconciliation and national reconstruction and development.

I should like to pay a special tribute to you, Sir, for your effective and wise leadership as President of the Council and for your valuable contribution, which has enabled the Council successfully to fulfil its mandate. Our sincere appreciation also goes to the High Commissioner for Namibia and to the Secretary of the Council and his competent staff for their important role in the process towards Namibian independence.

It was 23 years ago that the Council for Namibia was established as the legal Administering Authority for the Territory. Since its inception the Council

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

spotlighted the bitter truism that the virulent colonial blight constituted the most obstinate impediment to bringing the process of world-wide decolonization to its final consummation. It was widely recognized, however, that while this question was the most glaring setback to decolonization, the United Nations could not be held accountable for South Africa's continued illegal rule over the Territory. Indeed the Organization's preoccupation with this question has been unequalled in the annals of international endeavours in this field.

In retrospect it is not an exaggeration to state that the Council has throughout its existence steadfastly striven to fulfil its mandate and to secure the total withdrawal of apartheid South Africa from Namibia through a series of wide-ranging policies and programmes of action, provided moral and material assistance, and heightened global awareness of the dire situation in the Territory. Members of the Council have in detail and depth explored the very essence of the problem, continually seeking consensus and a common strategy on ways and means to ensure the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Namibian people. They have displayed perseverance and unity in adopting joint positions for approval by the General Assembly.

As a member of the Council my Government has consistently expressed its solidarity with the fraternal people of Namibia in their quest for freedom and liberty. In other forums as well, we have affirmed our unequivocal support for their sacred cause. Hence it has been an honour and privilege to share in the Council's responsibilities in the promotion of the fundamental interests of the Namiian people. Indonesia has without exception endorsed all Council decisions, programmes and activities. It has represented the Council in numerous forums and actively participated in its missions of consultation in various regions.

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

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As a member of the Council, my Government has consistently expressed its solidarity with the fraternal people of Namibia in their quest for freedom. In other forums, too, we have affirmed our unequivocal support for their sacred cause. Hence it has been an honour and privilege to share in the Council's responsibilities in the promotion of the fundamental interests of the Namibian people. Indonesia has without exception endorsed all Council decisions, programmes and activities. It has represented the Council in numerous forums and actively participated in its consultative missions in various regions. While annually contributing both to the United Nations Fund for Namibia and the Nationhood Programme, Indonesia has also extended assistance within its modest means to prepare Namibian cadres for the future task of administering and rebuilding an independent Namibia. Thus over the years my Government has been firmly committed to the Territory's liberation and decolonization.

The road to Namibian independence has been long and tortuous. Yet the people of Namibia remained steadfast in their struggle. We applaud their courage. It was their heroic resistance, bolstered by the support of the Council and the international community, that led to their liberation, which dawned on them nearly a quarter of a century after the termination of South Africa's Mandate and

(Mr. Wisnumurti, Indonesia)

13 years after the adoption of the United Nations plan. The successful conclusion of elections to the Constituent Assembly, the adoption of the Constitution, the establishment of a Government in an orderly manner, and, above all, the commitment of their leaders to co-operate in the efforts towards a peaceful solution, are an everlasting tribute to the political maturity and wisdom of the Namibians. It was a difficult and prolonged process of struggle and endurance. But their deep yearning for freedom now stands fulfilled. They are no longer the subjugated; they are now masters of their own destiny, as they have joined the ranks of the comity of nations. They have exercised their inalienable rights, and their vision of a free State has become a reality.

It is, however, necessary for my delegation to state at this juncture that while the mandate of the Council for Namibia stands fulfilled, it is still incumbent upon the international community to continue extending its co-operation and assistance to the Namibian people, either through multilateral forums or through bilateral channels, aimed at facilitating Namibia's national reconstruction and development. It is equally urgent for the international community to continue its utmost efforts to secure the early integration into Namibia of Walvis Bay and the offshore islands now illegally claimed by South Africa.

The achievement of Namibia's independence is an event of great importance in the annals of history. We salute Namibia and its people. Indonesia pledges its continued support for, and co-operation with, the Namibian people, now a free and independent nation committed to their national reconstruction and development, free from external interference and from intimidation or any other acts contrary to the United Nations Charter.

Mr. KARIM (Bangladesh): It gives me enormous pride and pleasure to be here in Windhoek - pride at being able to participate in the historic final

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia; pleasure, because I do so on free Namibian soil.

History is being made in this country. One of the last bastions of colonial domination has fallen. A new dawn has broken across the horizon of southern Africa, an event that the world awaited breathlessly.

All of us here are grateful for the kind words that President Sam Nujoma said to us. The Council is proud of the honour of sharing his glory and that of the Namibian people.

Namibia eminently deserved its freedom. The Namibians relentlessly fought and suffered for it. I am happy to be able to say that, through the glorious travails of the Namibians, the people of Bangladesh unflinchingly and steadfastly stood by their side. This expression of solidarity was evident in the Council for Namibia and elsewhere. Bangladesh is honoured to have been a party to the Namibian process to statehood through participation in the United Nations Transition Assistance Group. We salute the courage of the valiant Namibian people and admire the dynamic leadership given them by President Sam Nujoma and by the South West Africa People's Organization. We in Bangladesh have watched the progress of the Namibians, step by step, along the inexorable path of destiny to success and to glory.

President Hussain Muhammad Ershad holds President Nujoma as a close and dear friend. Bangladesh will continue to give Namibia unstinted support. We are prepared to share our own post-liberation-war nation-building experience with Namibia. For our two nations have a common history. Liberty for both of us came at the end of bitter struggles. Namibia and Bangladesh bear testimony to the truth that at the end of sorrow there is always joy.

For any organization, its end is not normally a happy occasion. For this Council it is different. For us it is a moment of joyous rejoicing, for our

(Mr. Karim, Bangladesh)

labours have finally come to fruition. Our thanks go to all those officials of the Council who have worked tirelessly to facilitate our task. The support we have received from Secretary-General Perez de Cuellar and his staff has been commendable. Your own leadership, Sir, has been truly inspiring. We owe you a debt of the deepest gratitude. I conclude with a prayer wishing Namibia God-speed in its journey along the road of peace, progress and prosperity.

Mr. AHMED (Pakistan): I wish to begin by expressing to the Government and people of Namibia the sincere thanks of my delegation for hosting these plenary meetings of the Council for Namibia in this beautiful city of Windhoek. It is most fitting that the last formal meetings of the Council should take place in the capital of a free and independent Namibia - a city which epitomizes the triumph of freedom over occupation, racialism and colonialism. We are grateful to the Government and people of Namibia for the warm hospitality extended to us and for making us feel at home in their midst.

I should also like to express the deep gratitude of the Pakistan delegation to Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, for his inspiring statement at the opening meeting. His profound observations most aptly captured the majesty of this occasion and have given a clear direction to our deliberations. Pakistan's Prime Minister, Benazir Bhutto, has instructed me to convey to him the best wishes of the Government and people of Pakistan in his endeavours to promote the economic and social well-being of his people.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

On 21 March a sordid chapter in the annals of human history was brought to a close. The long struggle of the valiant people of Namibia, under the dynamic leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), finally put an end to the dark episode of colonialism in the heartland of Africa. That struggle was not without sacrifice. Many brave Namibians willingly gave their lives in the quest for freedom and dignity. Many more suffered prolonged incarceration and numerous other indignities in that struggle. On this solemn occasion I would like to pay a special tribute to the people of Namibia for the valour and heroism they consistently displayed in their march towards freedom, which will for ever stand out as a beacon of hope for people struggling for their rights in all parts of the world.

We also applaud SWAPO, which provided exemplary leadership to the people of Namibia during their long ordeal. SWAPO has elicited the approbation of the entire international community for the sagacity and resonsibility with which it guided the people of Namibia to independence.

The independence of Namibia through freely held elections also constitutes a unique landmark in the history of the United Nations as the upholder of fundamental human rights. Rarely have the machinery and the resources of this world body been put to such good use so successfully. The organization and deployment of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), comprising thousands of military and civilian personnel, was no small achievement. The smooth nature of the operation, under trying conditions, testifies to the dedication and commitment of the UNTAG personnel to the call of duty. Pakistan is proud to have been associated with this process by contributing to all components of the Group. I might add that I had the pleasure of meeting some Pakistani members of the Group last night, and they are, in their personal capacity, proud to have been here and to have served at this historic moment.

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

I would be remiss were I to overlook the consistent and steadfast support extended by the Council to Namibia's struggle for independence. Since its establishment in 1967 the Council has been a true friend of the Nambian people. I should also be remiss if I did not pay tribute, both personally and on behalf of the delegation and Government of Pakistan, to you, Mr. President, for the statesmanlike role you have played and the very positive contribution you have made with regard to Namibia's independence struggle. The Council spared no effort to advance the goal of Namibian independence. It is a matter of profound satisfaction that the mandate entrusted to the Council by General Assembly resolution 2248 (S-V) of 1967 has been fulfilled.

It must be mentioned here that the responsibility of the United Nations to the Namibian people is not yet over. The United Nations Fund for Namibia has made a commendable contribution in preparing the Namibian people for the governance of the country after independence. Almost 4,000 Namibians have received training at the post-primary level under the various programmes of the United Nations Fund for Namibia. However, as mentioned in the report on the Nationhood Programme for Namibia, the long years of colonialism have denied the vast majority of Namibians the benefits of higher education. According to the report, the number of available qualified personnel for managing the various sectors of the Namibian economy will be inadequate, particularly in the fields of manufacturing, mining, agriculture, water and electricity supply and education. It is therefore extremely important that the programmes already under way within the framework of the Fund should be completed on schedule and that the requisite resources should be made available for that purpose.

The three seminars held last year on the manpower and technical requirements of an independent Namibia underscored the need for extensive international

(Mr. Ahmed, Pakistan)

co-operation to ensure the sustained development of the Namibian economy. The Government of Pakistan is ready to extend every possible assistance, within its means, for Namibia's economic and social development. It is our earnest hope that the more privileged members of the international community will participate unreservedly in Namibia's advancement, particularly for the achievement and consolidation of national self-reliance.

Nothing could be more gratifying to the members of the Council than the fact that these are its last plenary meetings. During its existence you, Mr. President, were a source of inspiration in guiding our deliberations with great sagacity, wisdom and far-sightedness. We commend you for your exemplary qualities of leadership. The fact that you are occupying the Chair for the last time means that your work has been completed successfully. Namibia is independent. Its people are free. We salute the brave people of Namibia and welcome them warmly, as the proud citizens of a great country, into the comity of nations.

Long live free Namibia!

Mr. FIGUEROA (Chile) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like first to hail you, Sir, as you preside over these historic meetings of the Council. You are a worthy son of Zambia, like a number of previous Presidents, and you, too, have always inspired its work with confidence and perseverance.

It is a special privilege for me to be present at one of the Council's last meetings. I was present in the General Assembly when the vote was taken on its creation, and it fell to me to participate in its first meetings. Chile is therefore very pleased to be present at these special meetings here in Windhoek. It is the realization of a dream shared by the vast majority of the international community, the completion of a task that entailed tremendous international efforts and in which the Council was called upon to play a leading role.

(Mr. Figueroa, Chile)

Chile is honoured to have been a member of the Council since its inception. I cannot fail to recall here the first mission the Council undertook at the beginning of its work to fulfil its mandate. In 1968, under the presidency of Chile's then Ambassador to the United Nations, José Piñera, it travelled to the continent of Africa with the symbolic purpose of meeting on Namibian territory.

(Mr. Figueroa, Chile)

That proved impossible, for the Council's plans were thwarted upon its arrival. However, the effort had been made. It was a clear expression of the political resolve of the member Governments, a resolve that has continued to inspire their actions to this very day. From the very beginning it was established beyond all doubt that our message was a serious one and that our efforts would continue in spite of the adverse conditions in which they had been begun and under which political activities to promote the cause of independence were forced to proceed.

As we come to the end of our journey I must recall the central role played by the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), the people's liberation movement, whose leader, Mr. Sam Nujoma, is now the President of the new Namibia and guides its destiny.

On behalf of the President of Chile, Patricio Aylwin, it is my pleasure to convey to His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma an expression of admiration and solidarity as he assumes his responsibilities as Namibian Chief Executive and to deliver the same message to the Namibian people.

The United Nations can be proud of having contributed to the process of Namibian independence, as it has in so many other cases, and all mankind owes it a debt of gratitude. A chapter of history is drawing to a close and a new one is opening, one filled with hope and promise. The international community and the Council for Namibia have successfully travelled a very long road and have achieved the goal of liberation. Now, having reached that goal, the Council is faced with the problem of terminating its mandate and entering into a second stage, not of struggle, but of co-operation with and support for the new State.

This second stage holds promising prospects for international co-operation, and it is to that area that we should be directing the greatest attention. Under the guidance of the Council for Namibia, important assistance programmes have

(Mr. Figueroa, Chile)

been developed, and concerted co-operative efforts, both bilateral and multilateral, are now needed to assist the Namibian people to begin their new life.

The new Government of Chile is ready to join in this new effort of solidarity and understanding, and in this spirit we declare our readiness to establish solid links with the Namibian Government in a concerted co-operative effort. In that context, my Government wishes to work to see that the task begun a quarter of a century ago shall now become our common task, one that will be a symbol and example of what international co-operation can be when the will exists.

Mr. SALAS (Mexico) (interpretation from Spanish): First, I should like to express my delegation's deep gratitude to our host country, Namibia, on whose sovereign territory we are privileged to meet. The hospitality of the Namibian people has been exemplary, and we were honoured by the presence at our opening meeting yesterday of President Sam Nujoma.

I also wish to express my delegation's admiration for your skills, Mr. President, as you lead our work with such talent and dignity in these last days of the Council for Namibia.

Our thanks also go to the members of the Council's secretariat for their invaluable support for and devotion to our work.

The delegation of Mexico is highly honoured to be present at these special plenary meetings of the Council. There can be no question but that the holding of these meetings for the first and last time in the capital of Namibia is the clearest possible proof that the goals towards which the Council has been striving for so many years have been attained and are being consolidated.

The achievement of Namibian independence is something for which that country's people were responsible. It was the Namibians who suffered for so many years under the colonial yoke and who were the victims of the odious apartheid régime. Yet

(Mr. Salas, Mexico)

their determination to achieve independence never flagged, and today, in an exemplary manifestation of political maturity, they have attained it through self-determination. On behalf of the Government of Mexico, my delegation takes this opportunity to convey its sincere congratulations to the people of Namibia.

On the occasion of Namibia's accession to independence on 21 March the President of Mexico, Carlos Salinas de Gortari, in a message addressed to President Nujoma, stated that Namibian independence represented

> "the successful culmination of a long process, in which the Namibian people have demonstrated their unswerving resolve to choose their own future and to take their place in the community of nations as a sovereign State, free from colonialist oppression and racial segregation."

The Mexican President also noted that Namibian independence gave rise to

> "the hope that many other peoples that have not yet been able to exercise their inalienable right to self-determination may soon see the fulfilment of their aspirations."

As a member of the Council for Namibia, Mexico has always expressed its total repudiation of the subjection through which South Africa sought to maintain indefinitely its control over Namibian territory. In keeping with the guiding principles of Mexico's foreign policy, my country never hesitated to call for South Africa's unconditional withdrawal, as stipulated in General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXI) of 27 October 1966, by which the Assembly terminated South Africa's Mandate over Namibia. Today we continue to support Namibia in its task of consolidating sovereign control over the whole of its territory.

As everyone is aware, the work done by the Council over the course of its more than two decades of existence has required clarity of purpose and singular

(Mr. Salas, Mexico)

tenacity. We supported the Council as it fulfilled its mandate, and it must be a source of satisfaction to it to see that its efforts were not in vain. In supporting the people of Namibia in achieving independence the Council helped to enhance the Organization's moral authority and sent a clear message on behalf of all the world's peoples who are still struggling for full self-determination.

Namibia's independence marks a decisive step forward in the struggle of peoples to determine their own destinies. Namibia has become a symbol of the possibilities for peaceful change to representative democratic processes. The independence process begun by Namibia in April last year, with the collaboration of the United Nations in full accordance with the provisions of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), is the clearest answer to those who have at times doubted that change could occur in so exemplary a fashion. Thus, Namibia has opened the way to continued progress in the efforts to ensure that in the not-too-distant future we rid ourselves totally of the spectre of colonialism.

Mexico's commitment to the independence of Namibia did not end on 21 March. Close links of friendship and common interest bind us to the people of Namibia. We share with Namibians a firm belief in self-determination, in full respect for the sovereign rights of all States and in the need to support the aspirations of all peoples to development. For that reason the Government of Mexico is firmly committed to strengthening its links with Namibia and to moving towards even more harmonious relations between our two countries.

Therefore, the Government of President Salinas de Gortari has proposed to the authorities of the Republic of Namibia that formal diplomatic relations be established as soon as possible. Once that is done Mexico will be sending an accredited envoy to be assigned to its joint representation in this city with the Governments of Venezuela and Colombia.

(Mr. Salas, Mexico)

In addition, I am pleased to announce that the Governments of Mexico and Venezuela will be undertaking a joint mission to study ways and means of providing technical assistance to Namibia in the areas of fisheries and oil resources. We will also, together with Colombia and Venezuela, study the possibilities of undertaking a joint visit of training ships to the Namibian coast.

All of those initiatives are part of a joint Latin American undertaking to strengthen our links with Africa and to pursue the firm commitment we have always had to Namibia, in particular, which is clearly demonstrated by the fact that all three of the countries I have mentioned are members of the Council.

Mexico is proud to have worked within the Council for Namibia to promote the highest interests of the Namibian people. We have always identified with their struggle, which has in many ways reflected the experience of almost all the States that now make up the international community. We are certain that Namibia's entry into the community of independent States is a step towards a more harmonious and just international society. Namibia's forthcoming accession to membership of the United Nations will strengthen the Organization, and we look forward to working together with the future representatives of Namibia in seeking to establish a better world for all our peoples.

Mr. POLOWCZYK (Poland): On behalf of the Polish delegation, I wish to congratulate you, Sir, and thank you most warmly for presiding over the United Nations Council for Namibia over the years with the greatest devotion and diplomatic skill and leading it to the successful conclusion of its duties. Our congratulations and thanks also go to the other officers of the Committee, the Council's secretariat and the Office of the High Commissioner for a job well done.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's sincere thanks to the President, Mr. Sam Nujoma, the Government and people of the Republic of Namibia, for inviting us to their beautiful country to participate in the concluding meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia. Despite the fact that we come from various parts of the world and are citizens of different countries, it is for us in a way like coming home. Therefore, these special meetings of the Council have a deep symbolic meaning.

I wish also to take the opportunity to renew Poland's sincere congratulations and greetings to the people of Namibia on the occasion of the achievement of their long-awaited independence. It took a long time - definitely too long a time. For a dark period of more than a century Namibians were denied freedom. No one gave it to them. They have achieved it; they have won it because of their determination, heroism and sacrifice, through the shedding of their blood and through the wisdom of their political leaders. They were not alone in their struggle. The sufferings of the Namibian people were deeply felt by the international community.

The United Nations system and the United Nations Council for Namibia, in particular, played a role of the utmost importance in the fight for Namibia's freedom. We may be justly proud of the assistance the Council has been able to extend to the Namibian people throughout its 23 years of existence. Its actions aimed at raising international support for the cause of a free Namibia, taking care of its national wealth, setting up international institutions, giving assistance to

(Mr. Polowczyk, Poland)

the Namibian exiled community - to name only a part of its work - significantly shortened the difficult path of the Namibian people to their freedom, giving them at the same time a starting point on the path -not an easy one - to their statehood.

For Poland, participation in the Council's work has always been a matter of particular importance and honour. My nation has been especially affected by history in the last two centuries. We were deprived of our statehood a couple of times, and the soil of Poland was soaked with the blood of its people in numerous uprisings and two world wars that rolled over my country.

We know what the loss of freedom means and the cost of getting it back. We take particular pride in the fact that Poles were always present where the fight for freedom was taking place. In this sense, Poland's participation in the work of the United Nations Council for Namibia and in the operations of the military and civil components of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) is a reflection of Poland's political principles and an acknowledgement of its own history as well. We really believe that if someone is deprived of freedom the rest of us are not fully free either. Therefore, we were not only right in standing behind the just struggle of the Namibian people, but we also benefited a great deal ourselves, as did all freedom-loving peoples.

In history there are some decisive battles. For sure, Namibia's independence brought the world closer to the end of the struggle of the people of South Africa against the scourge of apartheid. This system has already had its back broken, and its days are numbered.

The delegation of Poland looks forward to welcoming an independent Namibia as the 160th Member of the United Nations soon. My country hopes for mutually beneficial bilateral and multilateral co-operation with Namibia, and is ready to render the assistance needed to enable Namibia to consolidate its sovereignty and political and economic integrity.

(Mr. Polowczyk, Poland)

In conclusion, I should like to convey once again to the President, Government and people of Namibia Poland's best wishes for the prosperity, happiness and success of their country in its work of reconstruction and development. Long live Namibia! God speed Namibia!

Mr. SAVOV (Bulgaria): On this solemn occasion I should like, on behalf of my delegation, once again to convey most sincerely to Mr. Sam Nujoma, President of the Republic of Namibia, the Government and the Namibian people, the warmest feelings and felicitations of the Government and people of Bulgaria on the independence of this great country. I should also like to take this opportunity to express my delegation's thanks to the host country for our cordial reception in Windhoek.

We are grateful for the opportunity to attend this memorable meeting of the United Nations Council for Namibia on the soil of the independent nation - a lofty goal for which the United Nations and its Member States have striven for so long. We also share the profound emotions of everyone present in this Hall.

(Mr. Savov, Bulgaria)

Our gathering here is a symbolic reward for the selfless commitment of the United Nations Council for Namibia to the Namibian people's just and valiant struggle for self-determination and national independence.

Namibia has been the special concern of the United Nations since the earliest days of its existence. Despite the moments of frustration and the setbacks, the international community's arduous efforts have been crowned with success. In this regard, my delegation pays a special tribute to the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG), and to all those who stood firmly behind the Namibian people and carried out with dedication the most successful peace-keeping effort in the history of the world Organization.

The success of the process of implementing Security Council resolution 435 (1978) reaffirms the effectiveness of the United Nations and its ability to find political solutions to long-standing and complex problems.

While there has been considerable international involvement in the bringing about Namibia's independence, the formidable results that have been achieved would not have been possible without the unremitting struggle and sacrifices of the Namibian patriots. My delegation pays homage to the martyrs of the long struggle for independence. Their commitment to the noble ideals of freedom, justice and equality has given us strength for the fulfilment of our own responsibilities. Their suffering has filled us with a resolve to end once and for all the injustices caused by colonial domination.

My delegation takes this opportunity to express its deepest appreciation of the impressive way in which the members of the Constituent Assembly discharged their historic duty of drawing up the legal basis for an independent, sovereign and democratic Namibia.

(Mr. Savov, Bulgaria)

We are aware of the legacies of colonialism as well as of the immense challenges that the newly born nation will have to meet. But we are certain that the future of Namibia is in safe hands.

My delegation is also convinced that the role of the United Nations and the international community in assisting in the strengthening of Namibia's national independence and economic development will not diminish. In this regard, I should like to reiterate my Government's continued commitment to the Namibian cause. As a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, Bulgaria has spared no effort in extending political and moral as well as all possible material support to the struggling people of Namibia. My country is proud of its record in this respect. With the imminent announcement of the establishment of full diplomatic relations with the Republic of Namibia, my Government is looking forward to engaging in fruitful co-operation with Namibia in various fields, for the benefit of our friendly peoples.

The last colony in Africa is now free. Years of struggle, intervention on behalf of the international community, and isolation of South Africa have forced the apartheid régime to take a seat at the negotiation table. We hope that the positive changes in South Africa will also lead, sooner rather than later, to the complete eradication of the apartheid system. In this respect, we are convinced, the independence of Namibia will help to advance further the frontier of freedom, justice and equality.

The Namibian shield is firmly anchored in the sands of the Namib desert, ensuring that future Namibian generations can live in peace and prosperity.

Mr. VLASCEANU (Romania): Allow me first of all to express our deep thanks to the Government of Namibia for hosting this special session of the United Nations Council for Namibia here, on Namibian soil, in the beautiful capital of a newly independent nation. We are grateful for the warm hospitality we are enjoying here.

I wish to join other representatives in the Council who have warmly welcomed the presence at our meeting of Mr. Sam Nujoma, the President of the Republic of Namibia, and have referred to the important statement which he made before the Council and which will guide us in our deliberations and in drafting the final declaration of the special session.

I extend our congratulations to the President, to the entire leadership of Namibia, to the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) and to the entire Namibian people on the victory they have won, after a long and arduous struggle in which they made great sacrifices, for their national dignity and independence.

The proclamation of Namibia's independence, which crowns the heroic struggle of the Namibian people against colonialism and racial discrimination and for freedom, dignity and democracy, was followed with great interest, joy and sympathy by the Romanian people, who, as is known, have been enjoying since last December, after the Popular Revolution, their own freedom and are preparing, after such a long time, for their own free elections in May this year.

We regard the proclamation of Namibia's independence as an event of profound significance, of crucial importance not only for the Namibian people but for all Africa, for the world at large. It is a major contribution to the general cause of peace, understanding and co-operation between all nations in the world.

(Mr. Vlasceanu, Romania)

For us, as a member of the United Nations Council for Namibia, to celebrate the attainment of Namibia's independence, to see Namibia taking its rightful place in the international arena, among the free, sovereign nations of the world, is indeed a solemn occasion and a source of joy, pride and hope.

From its inception, the United Nations Council for Namibia, as was pointed out by the President of the Council, Mr. Peter Zuze, the Ambassador of Zambia, carried out sustained activities, as reflected in the report before this special session. The Council, which is about to pass into history, can proudly report to the General Assembly, at its next session, on the Council's accomplishments in fulfilling its historic task, in playing an important role in assisting the Namibian people, in mobilizing international support for Namibia's liberation.

As I pay a tribute to the Council for Namibia for a mission fulfilled, I wish also to pay a tribute, Mr. President, to your country, Zambia, for its great contribution to the Council's work, and to you personally for the dedication, diplomatic skill and ability with which you have guided the Council's work.

Our tribute goes also to the United Nations, especially the Secretary-General, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, and his Special Representative, Mr. Marti Ahtisaari, for their activities with respect to Namibia, for their commitment and dedication, for the role they have played in making it possible for us today to celebrate the birth of a new nation.

I assure the Council that free Romania will even increase its contribution to and co-operation with the United Nations in the solution of the problems before the world Organization.

(Mr. Vlasceanu, Romania)

The Romanian people, which won its own independence and freedom at the cost of great sacrifice, has always supported the just struggle of the Namibian people for its right to self-determination, freedom and national independence in a united Namibia. In the framework of the support extended in various international forums, Romania's representatives have made their contribution also in the United Nations Council for Namibia, developing large-scale activities for the implementation of the mandate entrusted to the Council by the General Assembly and fulfilling for a few years, among other functions, those of Rapporteur of the United Nations Fund for Namibia and Vice-Chairman of the Nationhood Programme for Namibia.

Between the Romanian people and the Namibian people there are strong bonds of sympathy, friendship and solidarity.

At present, when profound social and political changes are taking place in Romania, the Romanian people is deeply engaged in the promotion of broad political openness towards all nations of the world, towards broad international co-operation. We are proud that Romania is among the first nations that have established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Namibia.

I express all good wishes to the Namibian people in the implementation of its aspirations to freedom, national dignity, progress and prosperity, and I express my conviction that relations between free Romania and the Republic of Namibia will develop and strengthen, for the benefit of the peoples of the two countries and for the benefit of the cause of peace, understanding and co-operation between all nations.

(Mr. Vlasceanu, Romania)

Finally, I should like to express our thanks and appreciation to the Secretariat of the United Nations Council for Namibia, to the interpreters and translators and to all those who service the Council, for their competence, commitment and dedication in assisting the activities of the United Nations Council for Namibia in implementation of its mandate.

We will welcome the Republic of Namibia as a full Member of the United Nations, and we wish the Namibian people the greatest success along the road of peace, prosperity and well-being.

Mr. ELIADES (Cyprus): It is indeed a pleasure and an honour for me to represent Cyprus at these historic meetings of the Council for Namibia. Permit me at the outset to express, on behalf of my delegation, our sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on the skilful and wise manner in which you have performed your unenviable task. Our thanks also go to the members of the secretariat of the Council for their dedication in their supportive role. I further wish to express our appreciation to the Government of Namibia for its warm hospitality and the excellent facilities placed at our disposal.

It is only proper for me to join previous speakers in placing on record my delegation's gratitude and appreciation to the President of the Republic of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma, for his presence at the opening of these special plenary meetings and for his important statement. His inspiring leadership has been instrumental in the achievement of the final victory, as it was throughout the prolonged struggle against colonialism and apartheid, which was so proudly crowned with the attainment of independence.

Recognizing the heroism and dedication of the Namibian people and their leaders, who were undaunted by painful sacrifices in their sustained and unwavering devotion to the just cause of freedom and justice, the international community

(Mr. Eliades, Cyprus)

rallied to their support in their difficult struggle and provided a shining example of what can be achieved through selfless international co-operation.

It is no exaggeration to say that Namibia's sterling victory has contributed to strengthening the United Nations as a whole, as we recognize the important role played by the Security Council, the Secretary-General and the other organs of the United Nations - not to mention, of course, the work of the Council for Namibia itself.

At this joyous moment, elated by Namibia's attainment of independence, we salute its Government and people. At the same time, we realize that a difficult task lies ahead for the new nation. The reconstruction of the country after the ravages of a long legacy of colonization and brutal racism is an enormous challenge for Namibia.

I am confident that once again the international community will rise to the occasion and give its many-faceted support to the vital programmes for the reconstruction of Namibia.

Cyprus, for its part, has ardently supported the struggle for the liberation of Namibia, as a member of the Council and in many other ways. It will continue to demonstrate its support and solidarity in the future, strengthening even further the strong bonds of friendship and co-operation between our two countries.

In conclusion, I wish to express to the Namibian people our hope that they will enjoy all the success they deserve in their long struggle for the peaceful attainment of their future goals.

Ms. DIOP (Senegal) (interpretation from French): It is with particular pleasure that I am participating, on behalf of the people and Government of Senegal, these special meetings of the Council for Namibia. Nothing could give us, as members of the Council, greater pleasure than to hold our last meetings in an

(Ms. Diop, Senegal)

independent Namibia, after so many years of arduous struggle. On behalf of President Abdou Diouf, I pay tribute to President Sam Nujoma and the Government and people of Namibia for their historic victory over colonialism and apartheid. That victory has again proved the credibility of the United Nations, particularly thanks to the efforts of the Security Council, the Committee of 18, the Secretary-General, the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) and, of course, the Council for Namibia. The Council has certainly played its part in the Namibian people's long struggle for freedom and justice.

I should like to convey to you, Mr. President, the congratulations of my Government, and particularly of Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo, on the effectiveness with which you have always guided the Council's work. Thanks to your far-sightedness and determination, and that of your predecessors, the Council has successfully discharged its mandate.

The end of that mandate does not mean that there is no longer a need for the efforts of individual States. Namibia still needs our co-operation to meet the challenges before it and to rebuild peace. Senegal is still devoted to the Namibian cause, and will support the Namibian people in all their efforts for national reconstruction and the defence of their territorial integrity.

Independence was achieved through the perseverance of all the heroic Namibian people and the determination of the international community. Above all, however, it was achieved by Namibia's women and children, who sacrificed their lives and their youth so that freedom might triumph. I assure the Council that Senegal is eager to co-operate with the new Namibian State in the advancement of Namibian women. I hope that the Namibian Government will participate in the next summit meeting on children, which should provide an opportunity for the Namibian child to come to terms with himself.

(Ms. Diop, Senegal)

Finally, I should like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the secretariat, the interpreters and all the other staff who have helped us in our work here and wish them a safe return to New York.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.

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UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 540th MEETING

Held at Swawek Hall, Windhoek, Namibia
on Tuesday, 10 April 1990, at 3 p.m.

President: Mr. ZUZE (Zambia)

Report on the activities of the United Nations Council for Namibia since its establishment in fulfilment of its mandate with respect to Namibia

Consideration of the status report on the implementation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia

Consideration of the transitional arrangements for the United Nations Institute for Namibia

Consideration of the nationhood programme for Namibia and its component parts

General debate (continued)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEMS 2 to 5 (continued)

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS COUNCIL FOR NAMIBIA SINCE ITS ESTABLISHMENT IN FULFILMENT OF ITS MANDATE WITH RESPECT TO NAMIBIA

CONSIDERATION OF THE STATUS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DECREE NO. 1 FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES OF NAMIBIA

CONSIDERATION OF THE TRANSITIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE UNITED NATIONS INSTITUTE FOR NAMIBIA

CONSIDERATION OF THE NATIONHOOD PROGRAMME FOR NAMIBIA AND ITS COMPONENT PARTS

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. BEREZOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): First, Sir, I wish to add the warm congratulations of the Soviet delegation to those already expressed to the Namibian people, its Government and its President, in connection with a historic event, the attainment of independence, the birth of a free, sovereign State holding a legitimate equal place in the family of the world's nations. A great act of historic justice has been accomplished. The path to it was not simple; it traversed the suffering and lifetime struggle of the Namibian people, the loss of the lives of many glorious sons and daughters of this country and the arduous efforts of the leaders of the national liberation movement, the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO), which assumed responsibility for the liberation of Namibia and led the struggle.

We were greatly impressed by the statement of the President of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma, who highly praised the activities of the United Nations, including the Council of Namibia, in the liberation of his country. Namibia's independence is a victory not only of the Namibian people, but also of the whole of Africa and all the other continents of the Earth. It is a classic example of the effectiveness of dialogue between what until recently would have been completely incompatible worlds, a victory of reason and a move towards solving complex

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

international problems on the basis of new political thinking. The freeing of Namibia is a triumph for the United Nations, the Security Council, the Secretary-General, the Council for Namibia and other United Nations organs directly involved in the cause of this country's liberation. The United Nations has been able to prove and to show that the principles and ideals of its Charter are not simply the letter of international law and order, but an effective instrument for practical peacemaking. The effective implementation of Security Council resolution 435 (1978), with the help of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) and the involvement in the process of a large number of States, has enriched the world community with a valuable experience, which we are sure can be used by the United Nations in the future.

Finally, the Namibia settlement is a serious breakthrough in unblocking one of the oldest regional conflicts in the world, opening up prospects of settling other problems in southern Africa and - what is most noteworthy - prospects of dismantling the inhuman system of apartheid in South Africa. We hope that the process of change now taking place in South Africa will be irreversible.

For the Council for Namibia, to which the General Assembly entrusted responsibility for the country until its independence, this day is a special one. Today it has achieved the goal to which all its efforts were directed for 23 years, years not of idle waiting but years in which there were directed, purposeful activities devoted to the interests of the Namibian people and an independent Namibia. Despite the fact that the Council, owing to South Africa's position, was prevented from carrying out its activities on Namibian territory, it had an extremely close and comprehensive link with the people of Namibia. There is not one political, economic, social or other matter touching in any way on the interests of the Namibian people that was not fully and energetically explored by the Council for Namibia.

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(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

The Soviet Union, consistently supporting the full elimination of the remnants of colonialism and racism, is in favour of the word "apartheid" disappearing forever from the lexicon of mankind, and it did a great deal, including working within the Council, to bring closer and to implement the independence of Namibia, and it intends to promote further relaxations of the tense conflicts in southern Africa and the improvement of international relations as a whole.

The establishment of a new State is a process which puts enormous strain on a newly independent people and its leadership. That is absolutely true of Namibia. At this time what is particularly important is a cautious attitude, an understanding by the international community of the problems that will arise and multifaceted co-operation by States with Namibia. We support the appeal to give Namibia international support and assistance so that it may consolidate its political and economic independence and preserve its territorial integrity. A guarantee of this has brought international recognition of independent Namibia. As is well known, the Soviet Union established diplomatic relations with the Republic of Namibia on 21 March. Today, in congratulating the Namibian people and its leadership on the achievement of independence, we can also express fully deserved congratulations to the Council for Namibia on its implementation of the mandate entrusted to it by the United Nations and say: The goal has been achieved and the task accomplished.

(Mr. Berezovsky, USSR)

In that connection, we should give credit to you, Sir, representative of the Zambian people. You have guided the work of this organ in a selfless and dedicated manner. We also pay tribute to your predecessor and compatriot, Mr. Paul Lusaka, a member of the Council's Bureau. At this solemn moment we should also note the achievements of such leading international personalities as Sean McBride, Bernt Carlsson, former Commissioners for Namibia, and the Council's former Secretary, Mr. Rego-Monteiro, none of whom lived to see this joyous day. Much was done during his term in office as Commissioner by Mr. Mishra of India, and we should also give particular praise to Mr. Martti Ahtisaari, who led the operations of the United Nations in Namibia as the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and over a long period held the post of Commissioner for Namibia.

We should be remiss if we did not refer to the great contribution made to the Council's work by the staff of the Secretariat: Mr. Kabia, the Council's Secretary; Mr. Kapunta; and such veterans of the struggle for the Namibian cause as Ms. Maria Almeida, Ms. Maria Maldonado and Ms. Benet Fernandez among many, many more. At the end of the work of the Council for Namibia, they will now deal with other causes, and we wish them every success.

In conclusion, I once again wish the people of Namibia success, prosperity and a peaceful life.

Mr. SITHOLE (Zimbabwe): My delegation, too, would like to express its warmest gratitude and appreciation to the Government and people of Namibia for hosting the last plenary meetings of the United Nations Council for Namibia in this historic city of Windhoek. The freedom of Namibia is the culmination of the relentless sacrifices of the Namibian people, under the leadership of the South West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) on both the military and diplomatic fronts. The special contribution made by the Council for Namibia cannot be

(Mr. Sithole, Zimbabwe)

over-emphasized. I should also like to express to you, Sir, my delegation's appreciation of the way in which you have carried out the mandate entrusted to you by the United Nations. My delegation therefore extends its warmest congratulations to the Council on a job well done. Our commendations also go to the various regional and international organizations, such as the front-line States, the Organization of African Unity, and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries for the special efforts they made to ensure that the people of Namibia finally enjoy the fruits of freedom and independence.

It is an emotional moment for me personally to be finally in an independent and sovereign Namibia.

My delegation is convinced that, under the able guidance and wisdom of President Nujoma, Namibia will successfully tackle the numerous problems that it has inherited from its colonial past. Indeed, in his address on the opening of the special plenary meetings of the Council President Nujoma expressed his Government's desire to cure the ills of the past and ensure social justice for all its people, particularly those who had been victims of an unequal social order. Let me reiterate here that the people of Zimbabwe, based on the historical and fraternal ties of struggle for the elimination of colonialism between our two brotherly peoples, will render, within their means, all the necessary support to ensure that the people of Namibia realize the benefits of their new-found freedom.

In conclusion, it should be noted that whilst it is the primary responsibility of the new Government of Namibia to ensure the security and territorial integrity of this new independent nation, it is also the responsibility of the international community to ensure that the new nation is given all the help it needs to strengthen its security and defence capabilities.

My delegation salutes the people of Namibia for this very important achievement in their nation's history.

Mr. WISSEH (Liberia): It is a singular honour for me to be in Windhoek, the beautiful capital of an independent Namibia. We have been the recipients of its gracious hospitality, and I join previous speakers in expressing our appreciation and gratitude to President Sam Nujoma, the Government and people of Namibia, who have made our stay here pleasant and rewarding and have provided excellent facilities for the smooth conduct of our deliberations during these special plenary meetings of the Council.

I warmly congratulate you, Mr. President, and your predecessors and the other members of the Council for your untiring efforts to move the work of the Council forward in the interest of the Namibian people throughout the long difficult years of their just struggle to wrest control of Namibia from the occupying forces of apartheid South Africa. I also congratulate you on your comprehensive report on the Council's activities, which you presented a fortnight ago. My thanks also go to the Council's conscientious secretariat for the fine professional services they are rendering to make these special plenary meetings a success.

My country, Liberia, became independent in the nineteenth century, a period that witnessed the scramble for, and subsequent partitioning of, Africa by a class of predatory adventurers. It was also a time when the myth was concocted by colonizers who made themselves believe that the attribute of self-governance was their exclusive province, predetermined by fate.

(Mr. Wisseh, Liberia)

Fortunately, Liberia's accession to independence in 1847 negated that cynical notion. Yet, in order to prove those who fostered it correct, the young Liberian nation was the target of unwarranted encroachments. But the founding fathers were resolute and steadfast in their determination to demonstrate to the hostile colonial environment that peoples of the Negro race could govern themselves.

The consolidation of Liberia's independence served as a beacon of hope for our brothers and sisters who were then toiling under the yoke of colonialism. Born out of its experiences, and in order to safeguard its sovereignty, the Government of Liberia began to advance the cause of Africa at the League of Nations and the United Nations. As a further concrete expression of its commitment to African emancipation, Liberia provided diplomatic, moral and material assistance to various liberation movements of emerging African States.

It was in continuing pursuance of that policy that in 1960, Liberia, along with Ethiopia, instituted proceedings at the International Court of Justice against South Africa's illegal occupation of Namibia. Although the Court rejected the claim of both countries, their decision to take action further sensitized the international community to South Africa's intransigence on the Namibian question. It also served as a catalyst for the United Nations to bring Namibia under its supervision, thus leading to the creation of the Council for Namibia in 1967. Since its creation the Council, of which Liberia is a member, has fulfilled the mandate entrusted to it by General Assembly resolution 2248 (S-V) to administer the Territory until independence. In accordance with various other United Nations resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 435 (1978), the Secretary-General and various United Nations bodies have unceasingly represented the cause of Namibia.

(Mr. Wisseh, Liberia)

Today Namibia is independent. We can only applaud the Namibian people for their courage during the struggle and their show of tolerance, reconciliation and co-operation during the transition period. I have no doubt that this spirit will prevail as they seek to consolidate their independence. Their accomplishment is indeed worthy of emulation, especially by South Africa, which is belatedly, but half-heartedly, attempting to dismantle apartheid.

Liberia hopes that the international community will continue to give every support to the Namibian people, including the implementation of Decree No. 1 for the Protection of the Natural Resources of Namibia, so that they, too, will enjoy the fruits that accrue to an independent State.

In conclusion, we once more salute the gallant people of Namibia as they attain independence. We leave here with lasting memories of their beautiful country.

The PRESIDENT: Before we conclude the general debate on agenda items 2 to 5, I shall invite Counsel for the litigation between the Council for Namibia and Urenco and the State of the Netherlands on the protection of the natural resources of Namibia within the context of Decree No. 1. I call on Mr. Van Manen to tell us briefly how the case stands.

Mr. Van MANEN: It is a great privilege for my partner, Ben Smulders, and me to be in Windhoek and to be asked to address the Council, just as it is a great honour for my law firm and me to be involved, albeit on a very modest scale, in the protection of the natural resources of this great country, now independent at last.

(Mr. Van Manen)

In the litigation before the District Court of The Hague, the Council, as the plaintiff, is seeking a court order which would, in summary, first, prohibit Urenco Nederland from carrying out orders for enriched uranium placed on the basis of purchases of Namibian uranium; and, secondly, instruct the State of the Netherlands to supervise, with the help of a system of negative certificates of origin, Urenco's compliance with the first order.

The litigation has progressed to the stage of the first instance, where Urenco and the Dutch State are to submit their second statements. After that submission the Court would normally set down a date for oral argument and subsequently a date for judgement. Judgement could either be final, granting or dismissing the Council's claim, or interlocutory, requiring evidence from the Council or the defendants. Against a judgement in the first instance an appeal could be lodged with the Court of Appeal in The Hague, which can review the case in full, both factually and juridically. The judgement on appeal is open to appeal in cassation to the Supreme Court of the Netherlands, which subjects the case only to a juridical review, while accepting the facts as established by the Court of Appeal.

On 27 March this year the District Court adjourned the case until 22 May next, in order for the parties to advise the Court whether or not the litigation was to be continued. Further adjournments can be obtained for that purpose if one of the parties so wishes.

Since 21 March 1990 Namibia has been an independent State, the Republic of Namibia. I understand that the United Nations General Assembly is expected to decide soon that the Council has ceased to exist, or that it will cease to exist or at least cease to function. The question has been raised whether, notwithstanding such a decision, the litigation could be continued. This question has many aspects: political, juridical and otherwise. The juridical questions concern United Nations and other international law, Namibian law and Dutch law. Here I

(Mr. Van Manen)

shall deal only with three sub-questions: first, does the Council and/or the Republic of Namibia have sufficient interest in continuing the litigation in view of the French axiom point d'intérêt, point d'action - no interest, no claim - which also prevails in Dutch law; secondly, could the litigation be continued in the name of the Council; thirdly, could the Republic of Namibia be substituted for the Council as plaintiff?

With regard to the first question - whether there is sufficient interest - as I have said, the Council is seeking a court order prohibiting Urenco from carrying out orders for enriched uranium placed on the basis of purchases of Namibian uranium. In connection with that question a distinction has to be made between purchase contracts made before and after 21 March 1990.

If I assume correctly that since 21 March 1990 purchase contracts concerning Namibian uranium are being made with the consent of the Republic of Namibia, then with regard to such contracts the Council's claim, if applicable at all, would seem to be lacking sufficient interest.

(Mr. Van Manen)

However, as regards contracts made before 21 March 1990 there would seem to be sufficient interest in continuing the litigation. Uranium supply contracts are often entered into for terms of several years, so that the placing of orders for enriched uranium based on purchases of Namibian uranium prior to 21 March 1990 may continue for a considerable number of years after that date.

According to paragraph 6 of Decree No. 1, parties contravening the Decree may be held liable in damages by the Republic of Namibia. This paragraph is one of the reasons why the Council has not claimed damages. Another reason was that a claim for damages would complicate the proceedings and confront the Council with a formidable burden of proof.

But if the Republic of Namibia replaced the Council as plaintiff the possibility of adding a claim for damages would not seem to be excluded, and in my judgement should not be excluded. Additional complications could then be limited if, as is possible under Dutch law, that claim aimed not at any more or less specific amount of damages; but, rather, at a decision to the effect that Urenco is in principle liable in damages and that the amount thereof will be established in separate proceedings. The burden of proof would be less formidable if the Republic had access to the records of Rossing Ltd. Such a claim for damages would provide for additional interest in continuing the litigation.

I come to the second question: possible continuation of the litigation in the name of the Council. If a company is declared bankrupt, or if its shareholders decided to terminate its existence, under Dutch law the company will continue to exist to the extent that it is necessary, and as long as it is necessary, to wind up its affairs. Thus a company may continue to exist solely for the purpose of completing pending litigation in which it is involved. Therefore, under Dutch law

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the Council could continue to exist solely for the purpose of completing the present litigation. However, whether the Council can so continue to exist is primarily a matter of United Nations law.

The third question concerns substitution of the Republic for the Council in the litigation. In this respect I shall give a couple of analogies that may sound a little disrespectful. However, they are not intended to be disrespectful; I believe they may help to clarify matters. Under Dutch law a person involved in legal proceedings as a minor is represented before the court by his tutor. If pending the proceedings the minor comes of age, the tutor may continue to act as a qualitate qua party to the proceedings for the duration of the current instance. In the event of an appeal, however, the former minor must be substituted for the tutor.

Similarly, if a person involved in legal proceedings dies, the proceedings may be continued in that person's name for the duration of the current instance. In a subsequent instance, however, the heirs must take over.

Both cases would appear to provide for convincing arguments per analogiam that the Republic of Namibia can be substituted for the Council under Dutch law. Further, there is Dutch case law concerning litigation involving former Dutch New Guinea, Suriname, before and after its independence and a dissolved public body governing canals and other waterways in a particular area, which could lend additional support to such arguments. However, this again would seem to be primarily not a matter of Dutch law, but rather of United Nations and other international law, and possibly also of Namibian law.

If the Republic wishes to continue the litigation, or at least to keep open its option to do so - for example, pending negotiations with the State of the Netherlands about a settlement in the form of an agreement on a system of negative certificates of origin, as proposed in the Council's claim - it would seem

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imperative that certain arrangements be made between the Council and the Republic before the Council ceases to exist.

If this is deemed sufficient under United Nations law, such an arrangement could take the form of an agreement or other instrument whereby the Council transfers to the Republic of Namibia, perhaps with other assets, the Council's right to claim the order sought in the litigation and all rights and obligations relating to the litigation as regards the period before the transfer.

Such an agreement would appear to be a normal arrangement in the course of winding up the Council's affairs. In fact, in view of its tasks described in General Assembly resolution 2145 (XXII), the Council would in my judgement even be committed to entering into such an arrangement if the Republic so wished, so as not to forfeit its rights.

Finally, I wish to add a few words about cost. The cost of continuing the litigation is difficult to estimate more or less exactly, because it will depend on, amongst other things, further defences put forward by the defendants. In this regard, however, it is to be borne in mind that by far the greatest portion of the cost incurred so far is attributable to the preparation of the writ of summons served in July 1987.

The time and therefore the cost involved in that preparation was substantial, notably because initial preparations prior to 1985 had developed along two separate tracks: the judicial track and the factual/political track, which until 1985 had not been co-ordinated thoroughly. Consequently, the jurists had no clear picture of the technical and commercial issues involved, and on the other hand the technical and commercial researchers lacked understanding of the legal requirements. Moreover, the political issue of involving the State of the Netherlands in the litigation had not yet been considered fully.

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Sorting out and co-ordinating those issues took over two years after the decision to start litigation had been taken in May/June 1985. The decisions to involve the State in the litigation and to follow the so-called contractual route in defining Namibian uranium have simplified matters greatly. The cost involved in conducting the litigation after the writ of summons had been served upon the defendants thus far is minor as compared with the cost of preparing the case.

The PRESIDENT: The general debate is now concluded.

We have reached the stage of turning matters over to the Committee of the Whole which is responsible for considering the report of the Drafting Committee. At its 537th meeting, held on 28 March 1990, the Council decided to appoint Ambassador Mustapha Aksin, Permanent Representative of Turkey, one of the Council's Vice-Presidents, as Chairman of the Committee of the Whole, and Ambassador Pedro Sorensen of Venezuela as Rapporteur.

I shall now adjourn the meeting of the Council so that the Committee of the Whole may hold its meeting.

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.